

THE
DRAMATICK WORKS
OF
GEORGE COLMAN.

VOL. I.



82C.16

THE
DRAMATICK WORKS
OF
GEORGE COLMAN.

VOLUME THE FIRST;

CONTAINING,
The JEALOUS WIFE,
The CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE.

L O N D O N,
Printed for T. BECKET, Adelphi, Strand.

MDCCCLXXVII.



THE
JEALOUS WIFE.

A
COMEDY.

*First acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, on
the 12th of February, 1761.*

VOL. I.

B

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE use that has been made in this comedy of Fielding's admirable novel of Tom Jones, must be obvious to the most ordinary reader. Some hints have also been taken from the account of Mr. and Mrs. Freeman, in No. 212, and No. 216, of the Spectator; and the short scene of Charles's intoxication, at the end of the third act, is partly an imitation of the behaviour of Syrus, much in the same circumstances, in the Adelphi of Terence. There are also some traces of the character of the Jealous Wife, in one of the latter papers of the Connoisseur.

It would be unjust, indeed, to omit mentioning my obligations to Mr. Garrick. To his inspection the comedy was submitted in its first rude state; and to my care and attention to follow his advice in many particulars, relating both to the fable and characters, I know that I am much indebted for the reception which this piece has met with from the public.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE EARL OF BATH.

MY LORD,

AFTER having written a play entirely without your knowledge; and after having frankly confessed that I only concealed my design, because I doubted of its meeting with your approbation; excuse me, if I attempt to vindicate one act of presumption by another; and now the piece is come abroad into the world, give me leave to hope that you will take it under your protection.

When I address myself to you on so publick an occasion, they, who know how much I owe to you, will undoubtedly expect that I shall not let slip so fair an opportunity of expressing my gratitude. They will naturally imagine, that the countenance you have ever shewn me, the kindness and indulgence with which you have treated me, and your continued acts of benevolence and generosity to me,

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will

DEDICATION.

will not be forgot; but that I shall dwell with pleasure on a subject, whereon I have nothing to say but what comes immediately from my heart.

The world, however, is deceived. Your eminent qualities are too well known, for me to expatiate on them: And as to your particular goodness to me, that, I fear, becomes too inconsiderable for general notice, from the object on which it has been exerted. I should chuse, therefore, rather to fall into another vein: To shew that scholars and writers have a title to your patronage; and to prove, that you, of all persons in the great world, are the very man, with whom it is most likely that an adventurer in letters should make free.

Let us only review your life and conversation, the company you have always kept, and the methods by which you have signalized yourself in this kingdom! Were not your earliest connections formed with an attention to literature? Were not your intimate acquaintance the most eminent men of their time, remarkable not only for worldly talents, and what are called solid understandings, but distinguished by that brilliancy and vivacity, peculiar to the lovers of the *belles lettres*? Did not you even condescend to associate with the professed wits of the age? It is well known, that you have passed
many

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many a social evening with Steele and Addison; you have joined in the rich humour of Arbuthnot; you have read the comedies of Congreve (my brother-student of the law) in manuscript; you have corresponded with Pope and Swift; and Gay lived and wrote in your house.

How you spent your time in this dangerous company, it is too easy to conceive. The turn and spirit of your compositions, notwithstanding your endeavours to be concealed, soon betrayed you for their author. Deep in the mysteries of politics, and acquainted with the revolution of every wheel of government, you rendered your wit subservient to these greater purposes. You have been frequently known to season the severity of debate, by a strong leaven of pleasantry and humour: Nay more, if I may believe what I have heard, you have not been contented merely with displaying your eloquence in parliament, but have exercised your other talents, for the same ends, in concert with other wicked wits, without doors.

This, my lord, is the character, which I am told, you have always borne in the world: and I must confess, that, in my opinion, you are not in the least altered. Notwithstanding you are so much farther advanced in life, you have as much wit,

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and, for aught I see, as great a love for wit, and tendency to be witty, as ever. If a pamphlet appears, whose solidity of argument, and strength of style, gives an alarm to the publick, it is immediately attributed to the earl of Bath. If a little *jeu d'esprit*, or a *bon mot*, goes about the town, ten to one but it is said to be the earl of Bath's. I perhaps am questioned about it. I know nothing of the matter: But from what I see of the earl of Bath, I am always apt to think, that if the work is masterly, nobody is more equal to the execution of it; or, if the wit is excellent, nobody is so likely to have thrown it out in such a careless manner, as to have forgot, almost immediately, what they who heard it always must remember.

Filled with this idea of your character, how can I bring myself to make a formal apology for the present undertaking? I do not find that your wit has ever done you any harm: That mine, if I had any, should, like yours, be made conducive to greater ends, might, I fear, rather be wished than expected: And yet, whether "I shall leave a calling for this idle trade," is a point, which, I hope, the world will not too hastily decide, but candidly leave to time alone to determine. If I am to blame in what I have done, you have been in
part

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part the innocent occasion of it, and must give me leave to quote you as a fresh instance of the dangerous quality of wit, and, in the spirit of Shakespeare's Dogberry, to desire you "to correct yourself, for the example of others."

I am,

MY LORD,

Your Lorship's most obliged,

and grateful humble Servant,

Lincoln's Inn,
Feb. 18, 1762.

GEORGE COLMAN.

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PRO-

P R O L O G U E,

Written by Mr. LLOYD,

And spoken by Mr. GARRICK.

THE Jealous Wife! a Comedy! Poor man!
A charming subject, but a wretched plan!
His skittish wit, o'erleaping the due bound,
Commits flat trespass upon tragic ground.
Quarrels, upbraidings, jealousies, and spleen,
Grow too familiar in the comic scene.
Tinge but the language with heroic chime,
'Tis passion, pathos, character, sublime!
What round big words had swell'd the pompous scene,
A king the husband, and the wife a queen!
Then might Distraction rend her graceful hair,
See fightless forms, and scream, and gape, and stare.
Draw canstir Death had rag'd without controul,
Here the drawn dagger, there the poison'd bowl.
What eyes had stream'd at all the whining woe!
What hands had thunder'd at each *ba!* and *oh!*
But peace! the gentle Prologue custom sends,
Like drum and serjeant, to beat up for friends.

At

P R O L O G U E

At vice and folly, each a lawful game,
Our author flies, but with no *partial* aim.
He read the manners, open as they lie
In Nature's volume to the general eye.
Books too he read, nor blush'd to use their store.
He does but what his betters did before.
Shakespeare has done it, and the Grecian stage
Caught truth of character from Homer's page.

If in his scenes an honest skill is shown,
And borrowing little, much appears his own;
If what a master's happy pencil drew
He brings more forward in dramatick view;
To your decision he submits his cause,
Secure of 'candour, anxious for applause.

But if, all rude, his artless scenes deface
The simple beauties which he meant to grace;
If, an invader upon others land,
He spoil and plunder with a robber's hand;
Do justice on him!—as on fools before—
And give to *blockheads* past one *blockhead* more.

DRAMATIS

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

OAKLY,	<i>Mr. Garrick,</i>
Major OAKLY,	<i>Mr. Yates.</i>
CHARLES,	<i>Mr. Palmer.</i>
RUSSET,	<i>Mr. Burton.</i>
Sir HARRY BEAGLE,	<i>Mr. King.</i>
Lord TRINKET,	<i>Mr. O'Brien.</i>
Captain O'CUTTER,	<i>Mr. Moody.</i>
PARIS,	<i>Mr. Blakes.</i>
WILLIAM,	<i>Mr. Ackman.</i>
JOHN,	<i>Mr. Castle.</i>
TOM,	<i>Mr. Clough.</i>
Servant to Lady Free love,	<i>Mr. Fox.</i>
 Mrs. OAKLY,	 <i>Mrs. Pritchard.</i>
Lady FREELOVE,	<i>Mrs. Clive.</i>
HARRIOT,	<i>Miss Pritchard.</i>
TOILET,	<i>Mrs. Johnston.</i>
Chambermaid,	<i>Mrs. Simpson.</i>

T H E

T H E
J E A L O U S W I F E

A C T I

SCENE, a room in Oakly's house. Noise heard within.

Mrs. Oakly, within.

DON'T tell me! I know it is so. It's monstrous, and I will not bear it.

Oak. within. But, my dear!

Mrs. Oak. Nay, nay, &c. [*Squabbling within.*]

Enter Mrs. Oakly, with a letter, Oakly following.

Mrs. Oak. Say what you will, Mr. Oakly, you shall never persuade me, but this is some filthy intrigue of yours.

Oak. I can assure you, my love——

Mrs. Oak. Your love! Don't I know your——
Tell me, I say, this instant, every circumstance relating to this letter.

Oak.

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Oak. How can I tell you, when you will not so much as let me see it?

Mrs. Oak. Look you, Mr. Oakly, this usage is not to be borne. You take a pleasure in abusing my tenderness and soft disposition. To be perpetually running over the whole town, nay the whole kingdom too, in pursuit of your amours! Did not I discover that you were great with Mademoiselle, my own woman? did not you contract a shameful familiarity with Mrs. Freeman? did not I detect your intrigue with Lady Wealthy? were not you—

Oak. Oons, madam, the Grand Turk himself has not half so many mistresses! You throw me out of all patience. Do I know any body but our common friends? am I visited by any body, that does not visit you? do I ever go out, unless you go with me? and am I not as constantly by your side, as if I was tied to your apron-strings?

Mrs. Oak. Go, go, you are a false man. Have not I found you out a thousand times? and have not I this moment a letter in my hand, which convinces me of your baseness? Let me know the whole affair, or I will——

Oak. Let you know! Let me know what you would have of me. You stop my letter before it comes to my hands, and then expect that I should know the contents of it.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Oak. Heaven be praised, I stop it! I suspected some of these doings for some time past. But the letter informs me who she is, and I'll be revenged on her sufficiently. Oh, you base man you!

Oak. I beg, my dear, that you would moderate your passion! Shew me the letter, and I'll convince you of my innocence.

Mrs. Oak. Innocence! abominable! innocence! But I am not to be made such a fool: I am convinced of your perfidy, and very sure that—

Oak. 'Sdeath and fire! your passion hurries you out of your senses. Will you hear me?

Mrs. Oak. No; you are a base man, and I will not hear you.

Oak. Why then, my dear, since you will neither talk reasonably yourself, nor listen to reason from me, I shall take my leave till you are in a better humour. So, your Servant! [Going.]

Mrs. Oak. Ay, go, you cruel man! go to your mistresses, and leave your poor wife to her miseries. How unfortunate a woman am I! I could die with vexation. [Throwing herself into a chair.]

Oak. There it is. Now dare not I stir a step further: If I offer to go, she is in one of her fits in an instant. Never, sure, was woman at once

of

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of so violent and so delicate a constitution! What shall I say to sooth her? Nay, never make thyself so uneasy, my dear. Come, come, you know I love you. Nay, nay, you shall be convinced.

Mrs. Oak. I know you hate me; and that your unkindness and barbarity will be the death of me.

[*Whining.*]

Oak. Do not vex yourself at this rate. I love you most passionately: Indeed I do. This must be some mistake.

Mrs. Oak. O, I am an unhappy woman!

[*Weeping.*]

Oak. Dry up thy tears, my love, and be comforted! You will find that I am not to blame in this matter. Come, let me see this letter. Nay, you shall not deny me.

[*Taking the letter.*]

Mrs. Oak. There, take it! You know the hand, I am sure.

Oak. To Charles Oakly, Esq. (*Reading.*)—Hand! 'tis a clerk-like hand, indeed! a good round text! and was certainly never penned by a fair lady.

Mrs. Oak. Ay, laugh at me, do!

Oak. Forgive me, my love, I did not mean to laugh at thee. But what says the letter? [*Reading.*]

—*Daughter eloped—You must be privy to it—Scandalous*

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~~alous—Dis honourable—Satisfaction—Revenge—um,~~
um, um—injured father,

Henry Russet.

Mrs. Oak. [*Rising.*] Well, Sir, you see I have detected you: Tell me this instant where she is concealed.

Oak. So, so, so! This hurts me: I am shock'd.

[To himself.

Mrs. Oak. What, are you confounded with your guilt? have I caught you at last?

Oak. O, that wicked Charles! to decoy a young lady from her parents in the country! The profligacy of the young fellows of this age is abominable.

[To himself.

Mrs. Oak. [*Half aside and musing.*] Charles! Let me see. Charles—No! impossible! this is all a trick.

Oak. He has certainly ruined this poor lady.

[To himself.

Mrs. Oak. Art! art! all art! There's a sudden turn now! You have a ready wit for intrigue, I find.

Oak. Such an abandoned action! I wish I had never had the care of him.

[To himself.

Mrs. Oak. Mighty fine, Mr. Oakly! go on, Sir, go on! I see what you mean. Your assurance provokes

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provokes me beyond your very falshood itself. So you imagine, Sir, that this affected concern, this slimy pretence about Charles, is to bring you off. Matchless confidence ! But I am armed against every thing. I am prepar'd for all your dark schemes. I am aware of all your low stratagems.

Oak. See there now ! Was ever any thing so provoking ? to persevere in your ridiculous——For Heaven's sake, my dear, don't distract me. When you see my mind thus agitated and uneasy, that a young fellow, whom his dying father, my own brother, committed to my care, should be guilty of such enormous wickedness ; I say, when you are witness to my distress on this occasion, how can you be weak enough and cruel enough to——

Mrs. Oak. Prodigiously well, Sir ! you do it very well. Nay, keep it up, carry it on, there's nothing like going through with it. O, you artful creature ! But, Sir, I am not to be so easily satisfied. I do not believe a syllable of all this. Give me the letter. [*Snatching the letter.*] You shall sorely repent this vile business, for I am resolved that I will know the bottom of it. [*Exit.*]

Oakly solus.

Oak. This is beyond all patience. Provoking woman ! Her absurd suspicions interpret every thing

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thing the wrong way. She delights to make me wretched, because she sees I am attached to her; and converts my tenderness and affection into the instruments of my own torture. But this ungracious boy! In how many troubles will he involve his own and this lady's family! I never imagined that he was of such abandon'd principles. O, here he comes.

Enter Major Oakly and Charles.

Char. Good-morrow, Sir.

Maj. Good-morrow, brother, good-morrow. What, you have been at the old work, I find. I heard you; ding-dong, i'faith! She has rung a noble peal in your ears. But how now? why, sure you've had a remarkable warm bout on't. You seem more ruffled than usual.

Oak. I am, indeed, brother! thanks to that young gentleman there! Have a care, Charles! you may be called to a severe account for this. The honour of a family, Sir, is no such light matter.

Char. Sir!

Maj. Hey-day! what, has a curtain-lecture produced a lecture of morality? What is all this?

Oak. To a profligate mind, perhaps, these things may appear agreeable in the beginning: But don't you tremble at the consequences?

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Char. I see, Sir, that you are displeased with me, but I am quite at a loss how to guess at the occasion.

Oak. Tell me, Sir! where is Miss Harriot Russet?

Char. Miss Harriot Russet! Sir, explain.

Oak. Have not you decoy'd her from her father?

Char. I! decoy'd her! decoy'd my Harriot! I would sooner die than do her the least injury. What can this mean?

Maj. I believe the young dog has been at her, after all.

Oak. I was in hopes, Charles, you had better principles. But there is a letter just come from her father——

Char. A letter! what letter? dear Sir, give it me. Some intelligence of my Harriot, Major! The letter, Sir, the letter this moment, for Heaven's sake!

Oak. If this warmth, Charles, tends to prove your innocence——

Char. Dear Sir, excuse me. I'll prove any thing. Let me but see this letter, and I'll——

Oak. Let you see it? I could hardly get a sight of it myself. Mrs. Oakly has it.

Char. Has she got it? Major, I'll be with you again directly.

[Exit hastily.]

Maj. Hey-day! the devil's in the boy! What a fiery

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a fiery set of people! By my troth, I think the whole family is made up of nothing but combustible.

Oak. I like this emotion. It looks well. It may serve too to convince my wife of the folly of her suspicions. Would to Heaven I could quiet them for ever!

Maj. Why, pray now, my dear naughty brother, what heinous offence have you committed this morning? what new cause of suspicion? You have been asking one of the maids to mend your ruffe, I suppose; or have been hanging your head out of the window, when a pretty young woman has pass by; or——

Oak. How can you trifle with my distresses, Major? Did not I tell you it was about a letter?

Maj. A letter! hum! a suspicious circumstance, to be sure! What, and the seal a true-lover's knot now, ha? or an heart transfix'd with darts; or possibly the wax bore the industrious impression of a thimble; or perhaps, the folds were lovingly connected by a wafer, pricked with a pin, and the direction written in a vile scrawl, and not a word spelt as it should be. Ha, ha, ha!

Oak. Pho, brother! whatever it was, the letter, you find, was for Charles, not for me. This outrageous jealousy is the devil.

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Maj. Mere matrimonial blessings and domestick comfort, brother ! Jealousy is a certain sign of love.

Oak. Love ! It is this very love that hath made us both so miserable. Her love for me hath confined me to my house, like a state prisoner, without the liberty of seeing my friends, or the use of pen, ink, and paper ; while my love for her has made such a fool of me, that I have never had the spirit to contradict her. •

Maj. Ay, ay, there you've hit it : Mrs. Oakly would make an excellent wife, if you did but know how to manage her.

Oak. You are a rare fellow, indeed, to talk of managing a wife. A debauch'd batchelor, a rattle-brain'd rioting fellow, who have pick'd up your common-place notions of women in bagnios, taverns, and the camp ; whose most refined commerce with the sex, has been in order to delude country girls at your quarters, or to besiege the virtue of abigails, milliners, or mantuamakers' prentices.

Maj. So much the better ! so much the better ! Women are all alike in the main, brother ; high or low, married or single, quality or no quality. I have found them so, from a duchess down to a milk-maid.

Oak. Your savage notions are ridiculous. What do you know of a husband's feelings ? you, who
comprize

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comprise all your qualities in your *bonnet*, as you call it! Dead to all sentiments of delicacy, and incapable of any but the grossest attachments to women! This is your boasted refinement, your thorough knowledge of the world! while, with regard to women, one poor train of thinking, one narrow set of ideas, like the uniform of the regiment, serves the whole corps.

Maj. Very fine, brother! there's common-place for you, with a vengeance. Henceforth, expect no quarter from me. I tell you again and again, I know the sex better than you do. They all love to give themselves airs, and to have power: Every woman is a tyrant at the bottom. But they could never make a fool of me. No, no! no woman should ever domineer over me, let her be mistress or wife.

Oak. Single men can be no judges in these cases. They must happen in all families. But when things are driven to extremities—to see a woman in un-casiness—a woman one loves too—one's wife—who can withstand it? You neither speak nor think like a man that has lov'd, and been married, Major!

Maj. I wish I could hear a married man speak my language. I'm a bachelor, it's true; but I am no bad judge of your case, for all that. I know

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yours and Mrs. Oakly's disposition to an hair : She is all impetuosity and fire ; a very magazine of touchwood and gunpowder. You are hot enough too upon occasion, but then it's over in an instant : In comes love and conjugal affection, as you call it ; that is, mere folly and weakness ; and you draw off your forces, just when you should pursue the attack, and follow your advantage. Have at her with spirit, and the day's your own, brother !

Oak. I tell you, brother, you mistake the matter. Sulkiness, fits, tears ! these, and such as these, are the things which make a feeling man uneasy. Her passion and violence have not half such an effect on me.

Maj. Why, then, you may be sure, she'll play that upon you which she finds does most execution. But you must be proof against every thing. If she's furious, set passion against passion ; if you find her at her tricks, play off art against art, and foil her at her own weapons. That's your game, brother !

Oak. Why, what would you have me do ?

Maj. Do as you please for one month, whether she likes it or not ; and I'll answer for it, she will consent you shall do as you please all her life after.

Oak. This is fine talking. You do not consider the difficulty that—

Maj.

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Maj. You must overcome all difficulties. Assert your right boldly, man! give your own orders to servants, and see they observe them; read your own letters, and never let her have a sight of them; make your own appointments, and never be persuaded to break them; see what company you like; go out when you please; return when you please; and don't suffer yourself to be call'd to account where you have been. In short, do but shew yourself a man of spirit, leave off whining about love and tenderness, and nonsense, and the business is done, brother!

Oak. I believe you're in the right, Major! I see you're in the right. I'll do't, I'll certainly do't. But then it hurts me to the soul, to think what uneasiness I shall give her. The first opening of my design will throw her into fits, and the pursuit of it, perhaps, may be fatal.

Maj. Fits! ha, ha, ha! fits! I'll engage to cure her of her fits. Nobody understands hysterical cases better than I do. Besides, my sister's symptoms are not very dangerous. Did you ever hear of her falling into a fit, when you were not by? was she ever found in convulsions in her closet? No, no! these fits, the more care you take of them, the more you will increase the distemper.

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Let them alone, and they will wear themselves out, I warrant you.

Oak. True; very true; you're certainly in the right. I'll follow your advice. Where do you dine to-day? I'll order the coach, and go with you.

Maj. O brave! keep up this spirit, and you're made for ever.

Oak. You shall see now, Major! Who's there? [*Enter servant.*] Order the coach directly. I shall dine out to-day.

Ser. The coach, Sir? now, Sir?

Oak. Ay, now, immediately.

Ser. Now, Sir? The—the—coach, Sir? That is—my mistress—

Oak. Sirrah, do as you're bid. Bid them put to this instant.

Serv. Ye—yes, Sir; yes, Sir. [*Exit.*]

Oak. Well, where shall we dine?

Maj. At the St. Alban's, or where you will. This is excellent, if you do but hold it.

Oak. I will have my own way, I am determined.

Maj. That's right.

Oak. I am steel.

Maj. Bravo!

Oak. Adamant.

Maj. Bravissimo!

Oak. Just what you'd have me.

Maj.

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Maj. Why, that's well said. But *will* you do it?

Oak. I will.

Maj. You won't.

Oak. I will. I'll be a fool to her no longer. But hark ye, Major! my hat and sword lie in my study. I'll go and steal them out, while she is busy talking with Charles.

Maj. Steal them! for shame! Prithee take them boldly, call for them, make them bring them to you here, and go out with spirit, in the face of your whole family!

Oak. No, no; you are wrong. Let her rave after I am gone, and when I return, you know, I shall exert myself with more propriety, after this open affront to her authority.

Maj. Well, take your own way.

Oak. Ay, ay; let me manage it, let me manage it.

[*Exit.*]

Major Oakly solus.

Maj. Manage it! ay, to be sure, you're a rare manager! It is dangerous, they say, to meddle between man and wife. I am no great favourite of Mrs. Oakly's already; and in a week's time I expect to have the door shut in my teeth.

Enter Charles.

How now, Charles, what news?

Char.

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Char. Ruin'd and undone! she's gone, Uncle! my Harriot's lost for ever!

Maj. Gone off with a man? I thought so: they are all alike.

Char. O, no! fled to avoid that hateful match with Sir Harry Beagle.

Maj. Faith, a girl of spirit! Joy, Charles! I give you joy! She is your own, my boy! A fool and a great estate! devilish strong temptations!

Char. A wretch! I was sure she would never think of him.

Maj. No, to be sure! commend me to your modesty! refuse five thousand a year, and a baronet, for pretty Mr. Charles Oakly! It is true, indeed, that the looby has not a single idea in his head, besides a hound, a hunter, a five-barred gate, and a horse-race: But then he's rich, and that will qualify his absurdities. Money is a wonderful improver of the understanding. But whence comes all this intelligence?

Char. In an angry letter from her father. How miserable I am! If I had **not** offended my Harriot, much offended her, by that foolish riot and drinking at your house in the country, she would certainly at such a time have taken refuge in my arms.

Maj. A very agreeable refuge for a young lady, to be sure, and extremely decent!

Char.

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Char. I am all uneasiness. Did not she tell me, that she trembled at the thoughts of having trusted her affections with a man of such a wild disposition? What a heap of extravagancies was I guilty of!

Maj. Extravagancies with a witness! Ah, you silly young dog, you would ruin yourself with her father, in spite of all I could do. There you sat, as drunk as a lord, telling the old gentleman the whole affair, and swearing you would drive Sir Harry Beagle out of the country, though I kept winking and nodding, pulling you by the sleeve, and kicking your shins under the table, in hopes of stopping you; but all to no purpose.

Char. What distress may she be in at this instant! alone and defenceless! where, where can she be?

Maj. What relations or friends has she in town?

Char. Relations! Let me see: Faith, I have it. If she is in town, ten to one but she is at her aunt's, Lady Freelove's. I'll go thither immediately.

Maj. Lady Freelove's! Hold, hold, Charles! do you know her ladyship?

Char. Not much; but I'll break through all forms, to get to my Harriot.

Maj. I do know her ladyship.

Char. Well, and what do you know of her?

Maj.

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Maj. O, nothing! her ladyship is a woman of the world, that's all. She'll introduce Harriot to the best company.

Char. What do you mean?

Maj. Yes, yes, I would trust a wife, or a daughter, or a mistress, with lady Freeclove, to be sure! I tell you what, Charles! you're a good boy, but you don't know the world. Women are fifty times oftener ruined by their acquaintance with each other, than by their attachment to men. One thorough-paced lady will train up a thousand novices. That lady Freeclove is an arrant—By the bye, did not she, last summer, make formal proposals to Harriot's father from Lord Trinket?

Char. Yes; but they were received with the utmost contempt. The old gentleman, it seems, hates a lord, and he told her so in plain terms.

Maj. Such an aversion to the nobility may not run in the blood. The girl, I warrant you, has no objection. However, if she's there, watch her narrowly, Charles! Lady Freeclove is as mischievous as a monkey, and as cunning too. Have a care of her; I say, have a care of her.

Char. If she's there, I'll have her out of the house within this half hour, or set fire to it.

Maj. Nay, now you're too violent. Stay a moment, and we'll consider what's best to be done.

Re-

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Re-enter Oakly.

Oak. Come, is the coach ready? Let us be gone.
Does Charles go with us?

Char. I go with you! What can I do? I am so vexed and distracted, and so many thoughts crowd in upon me, I don't know which way to turn myself.

Mrs. Oak. [*within*] The coach! dines out!
Where is your master?

Oak. Zouns, brother, here she is!

Enter Mrs. Oakly.

Mrs. Oak. Pray, Mr. Oakly, what is the matter you cannot dine at home to-day?

Oak. Don't be uneasy, my dear! I have a little business to settle with my brother; so I am only just going to dinner with him and Charles to the tavern.

Mrs. Oak. Why cannot you settle your business here as well as at a tavern? But it is some of your ladies' business, I suppose, and so you must get rid of my company. This is chiefly your fault, Major Oakly.

Maj. Lord, sister, what signifies it, whether a man dines at home or abroad? [*Exit.*]

Mrs. Oak. It signifies a great deal, Sir! and I don't chuse——

Maj. Pho! let him go, my dear sister, let him go!

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go! he will be ten times better company when he comes back. I tell you what, sister: You sit at home till you are quite tired of one another, and then you grow cross, and fall out. If you would but part a little now and then, you might meet again in good humour.

Mrs. Oak. I beg, Major Oakly, that you would trouble yourself about your own affairs; and let me tell you, Sir, that I——

Oak. Nay, do not put thyself into a passion with the Major, my dear! it is not his fault; and I shall come back to thee very soon.

Mrs. Oak. Come back! why need you go out? I know well enough when you mean to deceive me; for then there is always a pretence of dining with Sir John, or my Lord, or somebody: But when you tell me, that you are going to a tavern, it's such a barefac'd affront——

Oak. This is so strange now! Why, my dear, I shall only just——

Mrs. Oak. Only just go after the lady in the letter, I suppose.

Oak. Well, well, I won't go then. Will that convince you? I'll stay with you, my dear. Will that satisfy you?

Maj. For shame! hold out, if you are a man.

[*Apart to Oakly.*

Oak.

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Oak. She has been so much vexed this morning already, I must humour her a little now.

Maj. Fie, fie! go out, or you're undone.

Oak. You see it's impossible.

[*To Mrs. Oakly.*] I'll dine at home with thee, my love.

Mrs. Oak. Ay, ay, pray do, Sir! Dine at a tavern indeed! [Going.

Oak. [*Returning.*] You may depend on me another time, Major.

Maj. Steel! adamant! ah!

Mrs. Oak. [*Returning.*] Mr. Oakly!

Oak. O, my dear! [Exit.

Remain Major Oakly and Charles.

Maj. Ha, ha, ha! there's a picture of resolution. There goes a philosopher for you! ha, Charles!

Char. O, uncle! I have no spirits to laugh now.

Maj. So! I have a fine time on't, between you and my brother. Will you meet me to dinner at the St. Alban's, by four? we'll drink her health, and think of this affair.

Char. Don't depend on me: I shall be running all over the town, in pursuit of my Harriot. I have been

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been considering what you have said; but at all events I'll go directly to Lady Freelove's. If I find her not there, which way I shall direct myself, Heaven knows.

Maj. Hark ye, Charles! if you meet with her, you may be at a loss. Bring her to my house: I have a snug room, and——

Char. Pho! prithee, uncle, don't trifle with me now.

Maj. Well, seriously then, my house is at your service.

Char. I thank you. But I must be gone.

Maj. Ay, ay, bring her to my house, and we'll settle the whole affair for you. You shall clap her into a post-chaise, take the chaplain of our regiment along with you, wheel her down to Scotland, and when you come back, send to settle her fortune with her father. That's the modern art of making love, Charles!

[*Exeunt.*]

A C T

A C T II.

SCENE, *a room in the Bull and Gate Inn.*

Enter Sir Harry Beagle and Tom.

Sir Harry.

TEN guineas a mare, and a crown the man ;
ha, Tom ?

Tom. Yes, your honour.

Sir H. And are you sure, Tom, that there is no
flaw in his blood ?

Tom. He's as good a thing, Sir, and as little beholden to the ground, as any horse that ever went over the turf upon four legs. Why, here's his whole pedigree, your honour.

Sir H. Is it attested ?

Tom. Very well attested : It is signed by Jack Spur, and my Lord Startall. [*Giving the pedigree.*]

Sir H. Let me see. [*Reading.*] Tom-come-tickle-me was got out of the famous 'Tantwivy mare, by Sir Aaron Driver's chestnut horse White Stockings. White Stockings his dam was got by Lord Hedge's

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South Barb, full sister to the Proserpine Filley, and his sire Tom Jones; his grandam was the Irish Duchefs, and his grandfire 'squire Sportly's Trajan; his great-grandam, and great-great-grandam, were Newmarket Peggy and Black Moll; and his great-grandfire, and great-great-grandfire, were Sir Ralph Whip's Regulus, and the famous prince Anamaboo.

his
JOHN ~~X~~ SPUR,
mark.

STARTALL.

Tom. All fine horses, and won every thing! A foal out of your honour's Bald-fac'd Venus by this horse, would beat the world.

Sir H. Well then, we'll think on't. But pox on't, Tom, I have certainly knock'd up my little roan gelding, in this damn'd wild-goose chace of three-score miles an end.

Tom. He's deadly blown, to be sure, your honour; and I am afraid we are upon a wrong scent after all. Madam Harriot certainly took across the country, instead of coming on to London.

Sir H. No, no, we trac'd her all the way up. But d'ye hear, Tom, look out among the stables and repositories here in town, for a smart road nag, and a strong horse to carry a portmanteau.

Tom.

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Tom. Sir Roger Turf's horses are to be sold: I'll see if there's ever a tight thing there. But I suppose, Sir, you would have one somewhat stronger than Snip: I do not think he's quite enough of a horse for your honour.

Sir H. Not enough of a horse! Snip's a powerful gelding; master of two stone more than my weight. If Snip stands sound, I would not take a hundred guineas for him. Poor Snip! go into the stable, Tom; see they give him a warm mash, and look at his heels and his eyes. But where's Mr. Russet all this while?

Tom. I left the squire at breakfast on a cold pigeon-pye, and enquiring after Madam Harriot in the kitchen. I'll let him know your honour would be glad to see him here.

Sir H. Ay, do. But hark ye, Tom, be sure you take care of Snip.

Tom. I'll warrant your honour.

Sir H. I'll be down in the stables myself by and by.

[Exit Tom.]

Sir Harry solus.

Let me see: Out of the famous Tantwivy by White Stockings; White Stockings his dam full sister to the Proserpine Filley, and his sire—Pox

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on't, how unlucky it is, that this damn'd accident should happen in the Newmarket week ! Ten to one I lose my match with Lord Choakjade, by not riding myself ; and I shall have no opportunity to hedge my bets neither. What a damn'd piece of work have I made on't ! I have knock'd up poor Snip, shall lose my match, and as to Harriot, why, the odds are that I lose my match there too. A skittish young tit ! If I once get her tight in hand, I'll make her wince for it. Her estate join'd to my own, I would have the finest stud and the noblest kennel in the whole country. But here comes her father, puffing and blowing like a broken-winded horse up hill.

Enter Russet.

Ruf. Well, Sir Harry, have you heard any thing of her ?

Sir H. Yes, I have been asking Tom about her, and he says you may have her for five hundred guineas.

Ruf. Five hundred guineas ! how d'ye mean ? where is she ? which way did she take ?

Sir H. Why, first she went to Epsom, then to Lincoln, then to Nottingham, and now she is at York.

Ruf.

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Ruf. Impossible! she could not go over half the ground in the time. What the devil are you talking of?

Sir H. Of the mare you were just now saying you wanted to buy.

Ruf. The devil take the mare! who would think of her, when I am mad about an affair of so much more consequence?

Sir H. You seem'd mad about her a little while ago. She's a fine mare; a thing of shape and blood.

Ruf. Damn her blood! Harriot! my dear provoking Harriot! where can she be? have you got any intelligence of her?

Sir H. No, faith, not I. We seem to be quite thrown out here. But, however, I have ordered Tom to try if he can hear any thing of her among the ostlers.

Ruf. Why don't you enquire after her yourself? Why don't you run up and down the whole town after her? T'other young rascal knows where she is, I warrant you. What a plague it is to have a daughter! when one loves her to distraction, and has toil'd and labour'd to make her happy, the ungrateful slut will sooner go to hell her own way. But she *shall* have him: I will make her happy, if

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I break her heart for it. A provoking gipsy! to run away, and torment her poor father, that doats on her! I'll never see her face again. Sir Harry, how can we get any intelligence of her? why don't you speak? why don't you tell me? Zouns, you seem as indifferent as if you did not care a farthing about her!

Sir H. Indifferent! you may well call me indifferent. This damn'd chace after her will cost me a thousand. If it had not been for her, I would not have been off the course this week, to have sav'd the lives of my whole family. I'll hold you six to two that——

Ruf. Zouns, hold your tongue, or talk more to the purpose! I swear, she is too good for you: You don't deserve such a wife. A fine, dear, sweet, lovely, charming girl! She'll break my heart. How shall I find her out? Do, prithee, Sir Harry, my dear honest friend, consider how we may discover where she is fled to.

Sir H. Suppose you put an advertisement into the news-papers, describing her marks, her age, her height, and where she stray'd from. I recover'd a bay mare once by that method.

Ruf. Advertise her! what, describe my daughter, and expose her in the publick papers, with a reward
for

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for bringing her home, like horses, stolen or stray'd!
 Recover'd a bay mare! the devil's in the fellow!
 He thinks of nothing but racers, and bay mares,
 and stallions. 'Sdeath! I wish your——

Sir H. I wish Harriot was fairly pounded. It
 would save us both a great deal of trouble.

Ruf. Which way shall I turn myself? I am half
 distracted. If I go to that young dog's house, he
 has certainly convey'd her somewhere out of my
 reach. If she does not send to me to-day, I'll give
 her up for ever. Perhaps, though, she may have
 met with some accident, and has nobody to assist
 her. No, she is certainly with that young rascal.
 I wish she was dead, and I was dead. I'll blow
 young Oakly's brains out.

Enter Tom.

Sir H. Well Tom, how is poor Snip?

Tom. A little better, Sir, after his warm bath.
 But Lady, the pointing bitch that followed you all
 the way, is deadly foot-fore.

Ruf. Damn Snip and Lady! have you heard any
 thing of Harriot?

Tom. Why, I came on purpose to let my master
 and your honour know, that John Ostler says as
 how, just such a lady, as I told him Madam Harriot

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was, came here in a four-wheel chaise, and was fetch'd away soon after by a fine lady in a chariot.

Ruf. Did she come alone?

Tom. Quite alone—only a servant-maid, please your honour.

Ruf. And what part of the town did they go to?

Tom. John Ostler says as how, they bid the coachman drive to Grosvenor-Square.

Sir H. Soho, pufs! yoics!

Ruf. She is certainly gone to that young rogue: He has got his aunt to fetch her from hence. Or else she is with her own aunt, lady Freelove: They both live in that part of the town. I'll go to his house; and, in the mean while, Sir Harry, you shall step to lady Freelove's. We'll find her, I warrant you. I'll teach my young mistress to be gadding. She shall marry you to-night. Come along, Sir Harry, come along! we won't lose a minute. Come along!

Sir H. Soho! hark forward! wind 'em and cross 'em! hark forward! yoics! yoics! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes to Oakly's. *Mrs. Oakly* sola.

Mrs. Oak. After all, that letter was certainly intended for my husband. I see plain enough they are all in a plot against me: My husband intriguing,
the

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the Major working him up to affront me, Charles owning his letters, and so playing into each others' hands. They think me a fool, I find: But I'll be too much for them yet. I have desired to speak with Mr. Oakly, and expect him here immediately. His temper is naturally open, and if he thinks my anger abated, and my suspicions laid asleep, he will certainly betray himself by his behaviour. I'll assume an air of good-humour, pretend to believe the fine story they have trumped up, throw him off his guard, and so draw the secret out of him. Here he comes. How hard it is to dissemble one's anger! O, I could rate him soundly! But I'll keep down my indignation at present, though it chokes me.

Enter Oakly.

O, my dear! I am very glad to see you. Pray sit down. [*They sit.*] I longed to see you. It seemed an age till I had an opportunity of talking over the silly affair that happened this morning. [*Mildly.*

Oak. Why really, my dear——

Mrs. Oak. Nay, don't look so grave now. Come, it's all over. Charles and you have cleared up matters. I am satisfied.

Oak. Indeed! I rejoice to hear it. You make me happy beyond my expectation. This disposition
will

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will insure our felicity. Do but lay aside your cruel, unjust suspicion, and we should never have the least difference.

Mrs. Oak. Indeed I begin to think so: I'll endeavour to get the better of it. And really sometimes it is very ridiculous. My uneasiness this morning, for instance! ha, ha, ha! to be so much alarmed about that idle letter, which turned out quite another thing at last. Was not I very angry with you? ha, ha, ha! [*Affecting a laugh.*]

Oak. Don't mention it. Let us both forget it. Your present cheerfulness makes amends for every thing.

Mrs. Oak. I am apt to be too violent: I love you too well to be quite easy about you. [*Fondly.*] Well; no matter. What is become of Charles?

Oak. Poor fellow! he is on the wing, rambling all over the town in pursuit of this young lady.

Mrs. Oak. Where is he gone, pray?

Oak. First of all, I believe, to some of her relations.

Mrs. Oak. Relations! who are they? where do they live?

Oak. There is an aunt of her's lives just in the neighbourhood; Lady Freelove.

Mrs. Oak. Lady Freelove! O, ho! gone to
Lady

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Lady Frecklove's, is he? And do you think he will hear any thing of her?

Oak. I don't know; but I hope so, with all my soul.

Mrs. Oak. Hope! with all your soul! Do you hope so? [Alarmed.]

Oak. Hope so! Ye—yes. Why, don't you hope so? [Surprised.]

Mrs. Oak. Well! Yes, [Recovering] O, ay, to be sure. I hope it of all things. You know, my dear, it must give me great satisfaction, as well as yourself, to see Charles well settled.

Oak. I should think so; and really I don't know where he can be settled so well. She is a most deserving young woman, I assure you.

Mrs. Oak. You are well acquainted with her then?

Oak. To be sure, my dear; after seeing her so often last summer at the Major's house in the country, and at her father's.

Mrs. Oak. So often!

Oak. O, ay, very often: Charles took care of that. Almost every day.

Mrs. Oak. Indeed! But, pray—a—a—a—I say,
—a—a— [Confused.]

Oak. What do you say, my dear?

Mrs.

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Mrs. Oak. I say—a—a— [*Stammering.*] Is she handsome?

Oak. Prodigiouſly handsome indeed.

Mrs. Oak. Prodigiouſly handsome! And is she reckoned a sensible girl?

Oak. A very sensible, modest, agreeable young lady as ever I knew. You would be extremely fond of her, I am ſure. You can't imagine how happy I was in her company. Poor Charles! she ſoon made a conqueſt of him, and no wonder. She has ſo many elegant accompliſhments! ſuch an infinite fund of chearfulneſs, and good humour! Why, ſhe's the darling of the whole country.

Mrs. Oak. Lord! you ſeem quite in raptures about her.

Oak. Raptures! not at all. I was only telling you the young lady's character. I thought you would be glad to find that Charles had made ſo ſensible a choice, and was ſo likely to be happy.

Mrs. Oak. O, Charles! True, as you ſay, Charles will be mighty happy.

Oak. Don't you think ſo?

Mrs. Oak. I am convinced of it. Poor Charles! I am much concern'd for him. He muſt be very uneaſy about her. I was thinking whether we could be of any ſervice to him in this affair.

Oak.

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Oak. Were you, my love? that is very good of you. Why, to be sure, we must endeavour to assist him. Let me see! how can we manage it? Gad, I have hit it! the luckiest thought! and it will be of great service to Charles.

Mrs. Oak. Well, what is it? [*Eagerly.*] You know I would do any thing to serve Charles, and oblige you. [*Mildly.*]

Oak. That is so kind! Lord, my dear, if you would but always consider things in this proper light, and continue this amiable temper, we should be the happiest people——

Mrs. Oak. I believe so. But what's your proposal?

Oak. I am sure you'll like it. Charles, you know, may perhaps be so lucky as to meet with this lady.

Mrs. Oak. True.

Oak. Now I was thinking, that he might, with your leave, my dear——

Mrs. Oak. Well?

Oak. Bring her home here.

Mrs. Oak. How!

Oak. Yes, bring her home here, my dear! It will make poor Charles's mind quite easy; and you may take her under your protection, till her father comes to town.

Mrs. Oak. Amazing! this is even beyond my expectation.

Oak.

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Oak. Why? what——

Mrs. Oak. Was there ever such assurance! take her under my protection! what, would you keep her under my nose?

Oak. Nay, I never conceiv'd——I thought you would have approv'd——

Mrs. Oak. What! make me your convenient woman? no place but my own house to serve your purposes?

Oak. Lord, this is the strangest misapprehension! I am quite astonished.

Mrs. Oak. Astonished! Yes; confused, detected, betrayed by your vain confidence of imposing on me. Why, sure you imagine me an idiot, a driveller. Charles, indeed! Yes, Charles, is a fine excuse for you. The letter this morning, the letter, Mr. Oakly!

Oak. The letter! why, sure that——

Mrs. Oak. Is sufficiently explained. You have made it very clear to me. Now I am convinced. I have no doubt of your perfidy. But I thank you for some hints you have given me, and you may be sure I shall make use of them. Nor will I rest till I have full conviction, and overwhelm you with the strongest proofs of your baseness towards me.

Oak. Nay, but——

Mrs.

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Mrs. Oak. Go, go! I have no doubt of your falsehood. Away! [Exit.]

Oakly solus.

Was there ever any thing like this? Such unaccountable behaviour! Angry I don't know why! jealous of I know not what! pretending to be satisfied merely to draw me in, and then creating imaginary proofs out of an innocent conversation! Hints! hints I have given her! what can she mean?

Toilet crossing the stage.

Toilet! where are you going?

Toil. To order the porter to let in no company to my lady to-day. She won't see a single soul, Sir. [Exit.]

Oak. What an unhappy woman! Now will she sit all day, feeding on her suspicions, till she has convinced herself of the truth of them.

John crossing the stage.

Well, Sir, what's your business?

John. Going to order the chariot, Sir. My lady's going out immediately. [Exit.]

Oak. Going out! what is all this? But every way she makes me miserable. Wild and ungovernable as the sea or the wind! made up of storms

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storms and tempests! I can't bear it; and, one way or other, I will put an end to it. [Exit.

SCENE, *Lady Freelove's.*

Enter Lady Freelove with a card. Servant following.

L. Free. [reading as she enters.] "And will take the liberty of waiting on her ladyship *en cavalier*, as he comes from the *ménage*." Does any body wait that brought this card?

Serv. Lord Trinket's servant is in the hall, madam.

L. Free. My compliments, and I shall be glad to see his lordship. Where is Miss Rustet?

Serv. In her own chamber, madam.

L. Free. What is she doing?

Serv. Writing, I believe, madam.

L. Free. O, ridiculous! Scribbling to that Oakly, I suppose. [Apart.] Let her know I should be glad of her company here. [Exit Servant.

Lady Freelove sola.

It is a mighty troublesome thing to manage a simple girl, that knows nothing of the world. Harriot, like all other girls, is foolishly fond of this young fellow of her own chusing; her first love; that is to say, the first man that is particularly civil, and the first air of consequence which a young lady gives herself. Poor silly soul! But Oakly must not have

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have her, positively. A match with Lord Trinket will add to the dignity of the family. I must bring her into it. I will throw her into his way as often as possible, and leave him to make his party good as fast as he can. But here she comes.

Enter Harriot.

Well, Harriot, still in the pouts? Nay, prithee, my dear little run-away girl, be more chearful! Your everlasting melancholy puts one into the vapours.

Har. Dear madam, excuse me. How can I be chearful in my present situation? I know my father's temper so well, that I am sure this step of mine must almost distract him. I sometimes wish that I had remained in the country, let what would have been the consequence.

L. Free. Why, it is a naughty child, that's certain; but it need not be so uneasy about papa, as you know that I wrote by last night's post, to acquaint him that his little lost sheep was safe, and that you are ready to obey his commands in every particular, except marrying that out, Sir Harry Beagle. Lord, lord, what a difference there is between a country and town education! Why, a London lass would have jumped out of a window into a gallant's arms, and, without thinking of her

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father,

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father, unless it were to have drawn a few bills on him, been an hundred miles off in nine or ten hours, and perhaps out of the kingdom in twenty-four.

Har. I fear I have already been too precipitate. I tremble for the consequences.

L. Free. I swear, child, you are a downright prude. Your way of talking gives me the spleen; so full of affection, and duty, and virtue, 'tis just like a funeral sermon. And, yet, pretty soul! it can love. Well, I wonder at your taste; a sneaking simple gentleman! without a title! and when, to my knowledge, you might have a man of quality to-morrow.

Har. Perhaps so. Your ladyship must excuse me, but many a man of quality would make me miserable.

L. Free. Indeed, my dear, these antediluvian notions will never do now-a-days; and, at the same time too, those little wicked eyes of yours speak a very different language. Indeed you have fine eyes, child; and they have made fine work with Lord Trinket.

Har. Lord Trinket! [contemptuously.]

L. Free. Yes, Lord Trinket. You know it as well as I do; and yet, you ill-natured thing, you will

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will not vouchsafe him a single smile. But you must give the poor soul a little encouragement; prithee do.

Har. Indeed I can't, madam; for of all mankind Lord Trinket is my aversion.

L. Free. Why so, child? He is counted a well-bred, sensible, young fellow; and the women all think him handsome.

Har. Yes, he is just polite enough to be able to be very unmannerly with a great deal of good breeding, is just handsome enough to make him most excessively vain of his person, and has just reflection enough to finish him for a coxcomb; qualifications which are all very common among those whom your ladyship calls men of quality.

L. Free. A satirist too! Indeed, my dear, this affectation sits very awkwardly upon you. There will be a superiority in the behaviour of persons of fashion.

Har. A superiority indeed! for his lordship always behaves with so much insolent familiarity, that I should almost imagine he was soliciting me for other favours, rather than to pass my whole life with him.

L. Free. Innocent freedoms, child, which every fine woman expects to be taken with her, as an acknowledgment of her beauty.

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Har. They are freedoms which, I think, no innocent woman can allow.

L. Free. Romantick to the last degree! why, you are in the country still, Harriot!

Enter Servant.

Serv. My Lord Trinket, madam. [Exit.

L. Free. I swear now I have a good mind to tell him all you have said.

Enter Lord Trinket, in boots, &c. as from the riding-house.

Your lordship's most obedient humble servant.

L. Trink. Your ladyship does me too much honour. Here I am, *en bottine*, as you see; just come from the manége. Miss Russet, I am your slave. I declare it makes me quite happy to find you together. 'Pon honour, ma'am [to Harriot] I begin to conceive great hopes of you: and as for you, lady Freelove, I cannot sufficiently commend your assiduity with your fair pupil. She was before possessed of every grace that Nature could bestow on her, and nobody is so well qualified as your ladyship, to give her the *bon ton*.

Har. Compliment and contempt all in a breath! My lord, I am obliged to you. But, waving my acknowledgments, give me leave to ask your lordship,

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ship, whether Nature and the *bon ton* (as you call it) are so different, that we must give up one in order to obtain the other?

L. Trink. Totally opposite, madam. The chief aim of the *bon ton* is to render persons of family different from the vulgar, for whom indeed Nature serves very well. For this reason it has, at various times, been ungenteel to see, to hear, to walk, to be in good health, and to have twenty other horrible perfections of Nature. Nature indeed may do very well sometimes. It made *you*, for instance, and it then made something very lovely; and if you would suffer us of quality to give you the *ton*, you would be absolutely divine: But now—me—madam—me—Nature never made such a thing as me.

Har. Why, indeed, I think your lordship has very few obligations to her.

L. Trink. Then you really think it's all my own? I declare now that is a mighty genteel compliment. Nay, if you begin to flatter already, you improve apace. 'Pon honour, lady Freeclove, I believe we shall make something of her at last.

L. Free. No doubt on't. It is in your lordship's power to make her a complete woman of fashion at once.

L. Trink. Hum! why, ay——

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Har. Your lordship must excuse me. I am of a very tasteless disposition. I shall never bear to be carried out of Nature.

L. Free. You are out of Nature now, Harriot! I am sure no woman, but yourself, ever objected to being carried among persons of quality. Would you believe it, my lord? here has she been a whole week in town, and would never suffer me to introduce her to a rout, an assembly, a concert, or even to court, or to the opera; nay, would hardly so much as mix with a living soul that has visited me.

L. Trink. No wonder, madam, you do not adopt the manners of persons of fashion, when you will not even honour them with your company. Were you to make one in our little *coterie*, we should soon make you sick of the boors and bumpkins of the horrid country. By-the-bye, I met a monster at the riding-house this morning, who gave me some intelligence that will surprize you, concerning your family.

Har. What intelligence?

L. Free. Who was this monster, as your lordship calls him? A curiosity, I dare say.

L. Trink. This monster, madam, was formerly my head-groom, and had the care of all my running-horses; but growing most abominably surly and

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and extravagant, as you know all those fellows do, I turned him off; and ever since my brother Slouch Trinket has had the care of my stud, rides all my principal matches himself, and——

Har. Dear my lord, don't talk of your groom and your brother, but tell me the news. Do you know any thing of my father?

L. Trink. Your father, madam, is now in town. This fellow, you must know, is now groom to Sir Harry Beagle, your sweet rural swain, and informed me, that his master and your father were running all over the town in quest of you; and that he himself had orders to enquire after you; for which reason, I suppose, he came to the riding-house-stables to look after a horse, thinking it, to be sure, a very likely place to meet you. Your father perhaps is gone to seek you at the Tower, or at Westminster-Abbey, which is all the idea he has of London; and your faithful lover is probably cheapening a hunter, and drinking strong beer, at the Horse and Jockey in Smithfield.

L. Free. The whole set admirably disposed of!

Har. Did not your lordship inform him where I was?

L. Trink. Not I, 'pon honour, madam: That I left to their own ingenuity to discover.

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L. Free. And pray, my lord, where in this town have this polite company bestowed themselves?

L. Trink. They lodge, madam, of all places in the world, at the Bull and Gate Inn in Holborn.

L. Free. Ha, ha, ha! the Bull and Gate! incomparable! What, have they brought any hay or cattle to town?

L. Trink. Very well, lady Free love, very well, indeed! There they are, like so many graziers; and there, it seems, they have learnt that this lady is certainly in London.

Har. Do, dear madam, send a card directly to my father, informing him where I am, and that your ladyship would be glad to see him here. For my part, I dare not venture into his presence, till you have in some measure pacified him; but, for Heaven's sake, desire him not to bring that wretched fellow along with him.

L. Trink. Wretched fellow! O ho! *courage,* milor Trinket! *[Aside.*

L. Free. I'll send immediately. Who's there?

Enter Servant.

Serv. *[apart to L. Free love.]* Sir Harry Beagle is below, madam.

L. Free. *[apart to Serv.]* I am not at home. Have they let him in?

Serv.

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Serv. Yes, madam.

L. Free. How abominably unlucky this is! Well, then shew him into my dressing-room. I will come to him there. [*Exit Serv.*]

L. Trink. Lady Freelove! no engagement, I hope. We won't part with you, 'pon honour.

L. Free. The worst engagement in the world; a pair of musty old prudes! Lady Formal and Miss Prate.

L. Trink. O the beldams! as nauseous as ipecacuanha, 'pon honour.

L. Free. Lud! lud! what shall I do with them? Why do these foolish women come troubling me now? I must wait on them in the dressing-room; and you must excuse the card, Harriot, till they are gone. I'll dispatch them as soon as I can; but Heaven knows when I shall get rid of them, for they are both everlasting gossips; though the words come from her ladyship one by one, like drops from a still, while the other tiresome woman overwhelms us with a flood of impertinence. Harriot, you'll entertain his lordship till I return. [*Exit.*]

L. Trink. Gone! 'Egad, my affairs here begin to grow very critical: The father in town! lover in town! surrounded by enemies! What shall I do? I have nothing for it but a *coup de main*!

[*To*

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[*To Harriot.*] 'Pon honour, I am not sorry for the coming-in of these old tabbies, and am much obliged to her ladyship for leaving us such an agreeable *tête-à-tête*.

Har. Your lordship will find me extremely bad company.

L. Trink. Not in the least, my dear! we'll entertain ourselves one way or other, I'll warrant you. 'Egad! I think it a mighty good opportunity to establish a better acquaintance with you.

Har. I don't understand you.

L. Trink. No? why then I'll speak plainer. [*Pausing, and looking her full in the face.*] You are an amazing fine creature, 'pon honour.

Har. If this be your lordship's polite conversation, I shall leave you to amuse yourself in soliloquy. [*Going.*]

L. Trink. No, no, no, madam, that must not be. [*Stopping her.*] This place, my passion, the opportunity, all conspire——

Har. How, Sir! you don't intend to do me any violence.

L. Trink. 'Pon honour, ma'am, it will be doing great violence to myself, if I do not. You must excuse me. [*Struggling with her.*]

Har. Help! help! murder! help!

L. Trink.

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L. Trink. Your yelping will signify nothing; nobody will come. *[Struggling.]*

Har. For Heaven's sake! Sir! my lord!

[Noise within.]

L. Trink. Pox on't, what noise? Then I must be quick. *[Still struggling.]*

Har. Help! murder! help! help!

Enter Charles, hastily.

Char. What do I hear? my Harriot's voice calling for help? Ha! *[Seeing them.]* Is it possible? Turn, ruffian! I'll find you employment.

[Drawing.]

L. Trink. You are a most impertinent scoundrel, and I'll whip you through the lungs, 'pon honour.

They fight, Harriot runs out screaming help!

Ec. Then

Enter Lady Freelove, Sir Harry Beagle, and Servants.

L. Free. How's this? swords drawn in my house! Part them? *[They are parted.]* This is the most impudent thing!

L. Trink. Well, rascal, I shall find a time; I know you, Sir!

Char. The sooner the better. I know your lordship too.

Sir

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Sir H. I faith, madam, [*To L. Free.*] we had like to have been in at the death.

L. Free. What is all this? Pray, Sir, what is the meaning of your coming hither to raise this disturbance? do you take my house for a brothel?

[*To Charles.*

Char. Not I, indeed, madam! but I believe his lordship does.

L. Trink. Impudent scoundrel!

L. Free. Your conversation, Sir, is as insolent as your behaviour. Who are you? what brought you here?

Char. I am one, madam, always ready to draw my sword in defence of innocence in distress, and more especially in the cause of that lady I delivered from his lordship's fury; in search of whom I troubled your ladyship's house.

L. Free. Her lover, I suppose? or what?

Char. At your ladyship's service; tho' not quite so violent in my passion as his lordship there.

L. Trink. Impertinent rascal!

L. Free. You shall be made to repent of this insolence.

L. Trink. Your ladyship may leave that to me.

Char. Ha, ha!

Sir H. But pray what is become of the lady all
this

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this while? why, lady Freelove, you told me she was not here, and, i'faith, I was just drawing off another way, if I had not heard the view-hollow.

L. Free. You shall see her immediately, Sir. Who's there?

Enter Servant.

Where is Miss Ruffet?

Serv. Gone out, madam.

L. Free. Gone out! where?

Serv. I don't know, madam. But she ran down the back stairs crying for help, crossed the servants' hall in tears, and took a chair at the door.

L. Free. Blockheads! to let her go out in a chair alone! Go and enquire after her immediately. *[Exit Servant.]*

Sir H. Gone! what a pox had I just run her down, and is the little puss stole away at last?

L. Free. Sir, if you will walk in *[To Sir Har.]* with his lordship and me, perhaps you may hear some tidings of her; though it is most probable she may be gone to her father. I don't know any other friend she has in town.

Char. I am heartily glad she is gone. She is safer any where than in this house.

L. Free. Mighty well, Sir! My lord, Sir Harry, I attend you.

L. Trind.

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L. Trink. You shall hear from me, Sir!

[*To Charles.*]

Char. Very well, my lord!

Sir H. Stole away! pox on't! stole away.

Exeunt Sir H. and L. Trink.

Manent Charles and Lady Freelove.

L. Free. Before I follow the company, give me leave to tell you, Sir, that your behaviour here has been so extraordinary——

Char. My treatment here, madam, has indeed been very extraordinary.

L. Free. Indeed! Well; no matter. Permit me to acquaint you, Sir, that there lies your way out, and that the greatest favour you can do me, is to leave the house immediately.

Char. That your ladyship may depend on. Since you have put Miss Ruffet to flight, you may be sure of not being troubled with my company. I'll after her immediately. I can't rest till I know what is become of her.

L. Free. If she has any regard for her reputation, she'll never put herself into such hands as your's.

Char. O, madam, there can be no doubt of her regard to that, by her leaving your ladyship.

L. Free. Leave my house!

Char.

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Char. Directly. A charming house! and a charming lady of the house too! ha, ha!

L. Free. Vulgar fellow!

Char. Fine lady!

[*Exeunt severally.*]

A C T III.

SCENE, *Lady Freelove's.*

Enter Lady Freelove, and Lord Trinket.

Lord Trinket.

DOUCEMENT, *doucement*, my dear lady Freelove! excuse me! I meant no harm, 'pon honour.

L. Free. Indeed, indeed, my lord Trinket, this is absolutely intolerable. What, to offer rudeness to a young lady in my house! what will the world say of it?

L. Trink. Just what the world pleases. It does not signify a doit what they say. However, I ask pardon; but, 'egad, I thought it was the best way.

L. Free. For shame, for shame, my lord! I am quite hurt at your want of discretion. Leave the whole

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whole conduct of this affair to me, or I'll have done with it at once. How strangely you have acted! There I went out of the way on purpose to serve you, by keeping off that looby Sir Harry Beagle, and preventing him or her father from seeing the girl, till we had some chance of managing her ourselves, and then you chose to make a disturbance, and spoil'd all.

L. Trink. Devil take Sir Harry, and t'other scoundrel too! That they should come driving hither just at so critical an instant! and that the wild little thing should take wing, and fly away the Lord knows whither!

L. Free. Ay! and there again you were indiscreet past redemption. To let her know that her father was in town, and where he was to be found too! For there I am confident she must be gone, as she is not acquainted with one creature in London.

L. Trink. Why, a father is in these cases the *pisaller*, I must confess. 'Pon honour, lady Freelove, I can scarce believe this obstinate girl a relation of yours. Such narrow notions! I'll swear, there is less trouble in getting ten women of the *premiere volée*, than in conquering the scruples of a silly girl in that stile of life.

L. Free.

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L. Free. Come, come, my lord, a truce with your reflections on my niece! Let us consider what is best to be done.

L. Trink. E'en just what your ladyship thinks proper. For my part, I am entirely *dérangée*.

L. Free. Will you submit to be governed by me then?

L. Trink. I'll be all obedience: Your ladyship's slave, 'pon honour.

L. Free. Why then, as this is rather an ugly affair in regard to me, as well as your lordship, and may make some noise, I think it absolutely necessary, merely to save appearances, that you should wait on her father, palliate matters as well as you can, and make a formal repetition of your proposal of marriage.

L. Trink. Your ladyship is perfectly in the right. You are quite *au fait* of the affair. It shall be done immediately; and then your reputation will be safe, and my conduct justified to all the world. But should the old rustick continue as stubborn as his daughter, your ladyship, I hope, has no objections to my being a little *rusé*; for I must have her, 'pon honour.

L. Free. Not in the least.

L. Trink. Or if a good opportunity should offer, and the girl should be still untractable—

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L. Free. Do what you will; I wash my hands of it; she's out of my care now, you know: But you must beware of your rivals. One, you know, is in the house with her, and the other will lose no opportunities of getting to her.

L. Trink. As to the fighting gentleman, I shall cut out work for him in his own way. I'll send him a *petit billet* to-morrow morning, and then there can be no great difficulty in outwitting her bumpkin father, and the baronet.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Captain O'Cutter to wait on your ladyship.

L. Free. O the hideous fellow! The Irish sailorman, for whom I prevailed on your lordship to get the post of a regulating captain. I suppose he is come to load me with his odious thanks. I won't be troubled with him now.

L. Trink. Let him in, by all means. He is the best creature to laugh at in nature. He is a perfect sea-monster, and always looks and talks as if he was upon deck. Besides, a thought strikes me; he may be of use.

L. Free. Well, send the creature up then.

Exit Servant.

But what fine thought is this?

L. Trink. A *coup de maitre*, 'pon honour! I intend—but hush! here the porpus comes.

Enter

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Enter Captain O'Catter.

L. Free. Captain, your humble servant! I am very glad to see you.

O'Cat. I am much obliged to you, my lady! Upon my conscience, the wind favours me at all points. I have no sooner got under way to tank your ladyship, but I have born down upon my noble friend his lordship too. I hope your lordship's well.

L. Trint. Very well, I thank you, captain. But you seem to be hurt in the service: What is the meaning of that patch over your right eye?

O'Cat. Some advanced wages from my new post my lord! This pressing is hot work, tho' it entitles us to no smart-money.

L. Free. And pray in what perilous adventure did you get that scar, captain?

O'Cat. Quite out of my element, indeed, my lady! I got it in an engagement by land. A day or two ago I spied three stout fellows, belonging to a marchant-man. They made down Wapping. I immadiately gave my lads the signal to chase, and we bore down right upon them. They tacked, and lay to. We gave them a tundering broadside, which they resaved like men; and one of them made use of small arms, which carried off the

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weadermost corner of Ned Gage's hat; so I immediately flood in with him, and raked him, but rasaved a wound on my starboord eye, from the stock of the pistol. However, we took them all, and they now lie under the hatches, with fifty more, a-boord a tinder off the Tower.

L. Trink. Well done, noble captain! But, however, you will soon have better employment; for I think the next step to your present post, is commonly a ship.

O'Cut. The sooner the better, my lord. Honest Terence O'Cutter shall never flinch, I'll warrant you; and has had as much seen-farvice as any man in the navy.

L. Trink. You may depend on my good offices, captain. But in the mean time it is in your power to do me a favour.

O'Cut. A favour, my lord! Your lordship does me honour. I would go round the world, from one ind to the other, by day or by night, to sarve your lordship, or my good lady here.

L. Trink. Dear madam, the luckiest thought in nature. [*Apart to L. Free.*] The favour I have to ask of you, captain, need not carry you so far out of your way. The whole affair is, that there are a couple of impudent fellows at an inn in Holborn, who

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who have affronted me, and you would oblige me infinitely, by pressing them into his majesty's service.

L. Free. Now I understand you. Admirable!

[*Apart to L. Trink.*

O'Cut. With all my heart, my lord, and tank you too, fait. But, by the bye, I hope they are not housekeepers, or freemen of the city. There's the devil to pay in meddling with them; they bodder one so about liberty and property and stuff. It was but t'other day that Jack Trowler was carried before my lord-mayor, and lost above a twelve-month's pay, for nothing at all—at all.

L. Trink. I'll take care you shall be brought into no trouble. These fellows were formerly my grooms. If you'll call on me in the morning, I'll go with you to the place.

O'Cut. I'll be with your lordship, and bring with me four or five as pretty boys as you'd wish to clip your two lucking eyes upon of a summer's day.

L. Trink. I am much obliged to you. But, captain, I have another little favour to beg of you.

O'Cut. Upon my shoul, and I'll do it.

L. Trink. What, before you know it?

O'Cut. Fore and aft, my lord.

L. Trink. A gentleman has offended me in a point of honour.

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O'Cut. Cut his throat.

L. Trink. Will you carry him a letter from me?

O'Cut. Indeed and I will; and I'll take you in tow too, and you shall engage him yard-arm and yard-arm.

L. Trink. Why then, captain, you'll come a little earlier to-morrow morning than you proposed, that you may attend him with my *billet*, before you proceed on the other affair.

O'Cut. Never fear it, my lord! Your servant! My ladyship, your humble servant!

L. Free. Captain, yours! Pray give my service to my friend Mrs. O'Cutter. How does she do?

O'Cut. I tank your ladyship's axing: The dear creature is purely tight and well.

L. Trink. How many children have you, captain?

O'Cut. Four, and please your lordship, and another upon the stocks.

L. Trink. When it is launched, I hope to be at the christening. I'll stand godfather, captain.

O'Cut. Your lordship's very good.

L. Trink. Well, you'll come to-morrow.

O'Cut. O, I'll not fail, my lord! Little Terence O'Cutter never fails, fait, when a throat is to be cut.

[*Exit.*

L. Free,

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L. Free. Ha, ha, ha! But sure you don't intend to ship off both her father and her country lover for the Indies?

L. Trink. O no! only let them contemplate the inside of a ship for a day or two.

L. Free. Well, but after all, my lord, this is a very bold undertaking. I don't think you'll be able to put it in practice.

L. Trink. Nothing so easy, 'pon honour. To press a gentleman, a man of quality, one of us, would not be so easy, I grant you. But these fellows, you know, have not half so decent an appearance as one of my footmen; and from their behaviour, conversation and dress, it is very possible to mistake them for grooms and ostlers.

L. Free. There may be something in that, indeed. But what use do you propose to make of this stratagem?

L. Trink. Every use in nature. This artifice must at least take them out of the way for some time; and in the mean while measures may be concerted to carry off the girl.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mrs. Oakly, madam, is at the door, in her chariot, and desires to have the honour of speaking to your ladyship on particular business.

F 4

L. Trink.

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L. Trink. Mrs. Oakly! what can that jealous-pated woman want with you?

L. Free. No matter what. I hate her mortally. Let her in. *[Exit Servant.]*

L. Trink. What wind blows her hither?

L. Free. A wind that must blow us some good.

L. Trink. How? I was amazed you chose to see her.

L. Free. How can you be so slow of apprehension? She comes, you may be sure, on some occasion relating to this girl; in order to assist young Oakly perhaps, to sooth me, and gain intelligence, and so forward the match; but I'll forbid the banns, I warrant you. Whatever she wants, I'll draw some sweet mischief out of it. But away, away! I think I hear her. Slip down the back stairs—or—stay—now I think on't, go out this way; meet her, and be sure to make her a very respectful bow, as you go out.

L. Trink. Hush! here she is.

Enter Mrs. Oakly.

[L. Trinket bows, and exit.]

Mrs. Oak. I beg pardon for giving your ladyship this trouble.

L. Free. I am always glad of the honour of seeing Mrs. Oakly.

Mrs. Oak.

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Mrs. Oak. There is a letter, madam, just come from the country, which has occasioned some alarm in our family. It comes from Mr. Russet.

L. Free. Mr. Russet!

Mrs. Oak. Yes, from Mr. Russet, madam; and is chiefly concerning his daughter. As she has the honour of being related to your ladyship, I took the liberty of waiting on you.

L. Free. She is indeed, as you say, madam, a relation of mine; but after what has happened, I scarce know how to acknowledge her.

Mrs. Oak. Has she been so much to blame, then?

L. Free. So much, madam! Only judge for yourself: Though she had been so indiscreet, not to say indecent in her conduct, as to elope from her father, I was in hopes to have hush'd up that matter, for the honour of our family. But she has run away from me too, madam; went off in the most abrupt manner, not an hour ago.

Mrs. Oak. You surprise me. Indeed her father, by his letter, seems apprehensive of the worst consequences. But does your ladyship imagine any harm has happened?

L. Free. I can't tell; I hope not; but, indeed, she is a strange girl. You know, madam, young
women

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women can't be too cautious in their conduct. She is, I am sorry to declare it, a very dangerous person to take into a family.

Mrs. Oakly. Indeed ! [*Alarmed.*

L. Free. If I was to say all I know !

Mrs. Oak. Why, sure, your ladyship knows of nothing that has been carried on clandestinely between her and Mr. Oakly ! [*In disorder.*

L. Free. Mr. Oakly !

Mrs. Oak. Mr. Oakly ! no, not Mr. Oakly—that is, not my husband : I don't mean him—not him—but his nephew, young Mr. Oakly.

L. Free. Jealous of her husband ! so, so ! now I know my game. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Oak. But pray, madam, give me leave to ask, was there any thing very particular in her conduct, while she was in your ladyship's house ?

L. Free. Why, really, considering she was here scarce a week, her behaviour was rather mysterious. Letters and messages, to and fro, between her and I don't know who. I suppose you know that Mr. Oakly's nephew has been here, madam.

Mrs. Oak. I was not sure of it. Has he been to wait on your ladyship already on this occasion ?

L. Free. To wait on me ! The expression is much too polite for the nature of his visit. My lord

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lord Trinket, the nobleman whom you met as you came in, had, you must know, madam, some thoughts of my niece; and as it would have been an advantageous match, I was glad of it: But I believe, after what he has been witness to this morning, he will drop all thoughts of it.

Mrs. Oak. I am sorry that any relation of mine should so far forget himself—

L. Free. It's no matter; his behaviour indeed, as well as the young lady's, was pretty extraordinary. And yet, after all, I don't believe *he* is the object of her affections.

Mrs. Oak. Ha!

[*Much alarmed.*]

L. Free. She has certainly an attachment somewhere; a strong one; but his lordship, who was present all the time, was convinced, as well as myself, that Mr. Oakly's nephew was rather a convenient friend, a kind of go-between, than a lover. Bless me, madam, you change colour! you seem uneasy! what's the matter?

Mrs. Oak. Nothing—madam—nothing! A little shocked that my husband should behave so.

L. Free. Your husband, madam!

Mrs. Oak. His nephew, I mean. His unpardonable rudeness! But I am not well: I am sorry I have given your ladyship so much trouble; I'll take my leave.

L. Free.

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L. Free. I declare, madam, you frighten me. Your being so visibly affected, makes me quite uneasy: I hope I have not said any thing—I really don't believe your husband is in fault. Men, to be sure, allow themselves strange liberties. But I think, nay I am sure, it cannot be so. It is impossible. Don't let what I have said, have any effect on you.

Mrs. Oak. No, it has not—I have no idea of such a thing. Your ladyship's most obedient! [*Going, returns.*] But sure, madam, you have not heard, or don't know any thing——

L. Free. Come, come, Mrs. Oakly, I see how it is, and it would not be kind to say all I know. I dare not tell you what I have heard. Only be on your guard: There can be no harm in that. Do you be against giving the girl any countenance, and see what effect it has.

Mrs. Oak. I will. I am much obliged—But does it appear to your ladyship, then, that Mr. Oakly—

L. Free. No, not at all: Nothing in't, I dare say. I would not create uneasiness in a family: But I am a woman myself, have been married, and can't help feeling for you. But don't be uneasy; there's nothing in't, I dare say.

Mrs. Oak. I think so. Your ladyship's humble servant.

L. Free.

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L. Free. Your servant, madam. Pray don't be alarmed; I must insist on your not making yourself uneasy.

Mrs. Oak. Not at all alarmed; not in the least uneasy. Your most obedient. *[Exit.*

L. Free. Ha, ha, ha! there she goes, brim-full of anger and jealousy, to vent it all on her husband. Mercy on the poor man!

Enter Lord Trinket.

Bless me, my lord! I thought you were gone.

L. Trink. Only into the next room. My curiosity would not let me stir a step further. I heard it all, and was never more diverted in my life, 'pon honour. Ha, ha, ha!

L. Free. How the silly creature took it! Ha, ha, ha!

L. Trink. Ha, ha, ha! My dear lady Freelove, you have a deal of ingenuity, a deal of *esprit*, 'pon honour.

L. Free. A little shell thrown into the enemy's works, that's all.

Bosb. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

L. Free. But I must leave you. I have twenty visits to pay. You'll let me know how you succeed in your secret expedition.

L. Trink.

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L. Trink. That you may depend on.

L. Free. Remember then that to-morrow morning I expect to see you. At present your lordship will excuse me. Who's there? [*Calling to the servants.*] Send Epingle into my dressing-room.

[*Exit.*

Lord Trinket solus.

L. Trink. So! If O'Cutter and his myrmidons are alert, I think I can't fail of success; and then *prenez garde*, mademoiselle Harriot! This is one of the drollest circumstances in nature. Here is my Lady Free love, a woman of sense, a woman that knows the world too, assisting me in this design. I never knew her ladyship so much out. How, in the name of wonder, can she imagine that a man of quality, or any man else 'egad, wou'd marry a fine girl, after—Not I, 'pon honour. No, no! when I have had the *entamure*, let who will take the rest of the loaf. [*Exit.*

SCENE changes to Mr. Oakly's.

Enter Harriot, following a Servant.

Har. Not at home! are you sure that Mrs. Oakly is not at home, Sir?

Serv. She is just gone out, madam.

Har. I have something of consequence—If you will give me leave, Sir, I will wait till she returns.

Servant

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Serv. You would not see her, if you did, madam. She has given positive orders not to be interrupted with any company to-day.

Har. Sure, Sir, if you were to let her know that I had particular business——

Serv. I should not dare to trouble her, indeed, madam.

Har. How unfortunate this is! What can I do? Pray, Sir, can I see *Mr. Oakly* then?

Serv. Yes, madam: I'll acquaint my master, if you please.

Har. Pray do, Sir.

Serv. Will you favour me with your name, madam?

Har. Be pleased, Sir, to let him know that a lady desires to speak with him.

Serv. I shall, madam. [Exit Servant.]

Harriet sola.

I wish I could have seen Mrs. Oakly! What an unhappy situation am I reduced to! What will the world say of me? and yet what could I do? To remain at Lady Freeclove's was impossible. Charles, I must own, has this very day revived much of my tenderness for him; and yet I dread the wildness of his disposition. I must now, however,
solicit

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solicit Mr. Oakly's protection; a circumstance (all things considered) rather disagreeable to a delicate mind, and which nothing, but the absolute necessity of it, could excuse. Good Heavens, what a multitude of difficulties and distresses am I thrown into, by my father's obstinate perseverance to force me into a marriage which my soul abhors!

Enter Oakly.

Oak. [*At entering.*] Where is this lady? [*Seeing her.*] Bless me, Miss Ruffet, is it you? Was ever any thing so unlucky? [*Aside.*] Is it possible, madam, that I see you here?

Har. It is too true, Sir! and the occasion on which I am now to trouble you, is so much in need of an apology, that——

Oak. Pray make none, madam!—If my wife shou'd return before I get her out of the house again! [*Aside.*]

Har. I dare say, Sir, you are not quite a stranger to the attachment your nephew has profess'd to me.

Oak. I am not, madam! I hope Charles has not been guilty of any baseness toward you: If he has, I'll never see his face again.

Har. I have no cause to accuse him. But——

Oak. But what, madam? Pray be quick!—

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The very person in the world I would not have seen!

[*Aside.*]

Har. You seem uneasy, Sir.

Oak. No, nothing at all. Pray go on, madam.

Har. I am at present, Sir, through a concurrence of strange accidents, in a very unfortunate situation; and do not know what will become of me, without your assistance.

Oak. I'll do every thing in my power to serve you. I know of your leaving your father, by a letter we have had from him. Pray let me know the rest of your story.

Har. My story, Sir, is very short. When I left my father's, I came immediately to London, and took refuge with a relation, where, instead of meeting with the protection I expected, I was alarmed with the most infamous designs upon my honour. It is not an hour ago, since your nephew rescued me from the attempts of a villain. I tremble to think, that I left him actually engaged in a duel.

Oak. He is very safe. He has just sent home the chariot from the St. Alben's tavern, where he dines to-day. But what are your commands for me, madam?

Har. I am heartily glad to hear of his safety.

Vol. I.

G

The

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The favour, Sir, I would now request of you is, that you will suffer me to remain for a few days in your house.

Oak. Madam !

Har. And that, in the mean time, you will use your utmost endeavours to reconcile me to my father, without his forcing me into a marriage with Sir Harry Beagle.

Oak. This is the most perplexing situation ! Why did not Charles take care to bestow you properly ?

Har. It is most probable, Sir, that I should not have consented to such a measure myself. The world is but too apt to censure, even without a cause : And if you are so kind as to admit me into your house, I must desire you not to consider Mr. Oakly in any other light than as your nephew ; as, in my present circumstances, I have particular objections to it.

Oak. What an unlucky circumstance ! Upon my soul, madam, I would do any thing to serve you ; but being in my house creates a difficulty that——

Har. I hope, Sir, you do not doubt the truth of what I have told you.

Oak. I religiously believe every tittle of it,
madam ;

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madam; but I have particular family considerations, that——

Har. Sure, Sir, you cannot suspect me to be base enough to form any connections in your family, contrary to your inclinations, while I am living in your house.

Oak. Such connections, madam, would do me and all my family great honour. I never dream'd of any scruples on that account. What can I do? Let me see—let me see—suppose—— [*Pausing.*]

Enter Mrs. Oakly behind, in a capuchin, tippet, &c.

Mrs. Oak. I am sure I heard the voice of a woman conversing with my husband. Ha! [*Seeing Harriot.*] It is so, indeed! Let me contain myself! I'll listen.

Har. I see, Sir, you are not inclin'd to serve me. Good Heaven, what am I reserv'd to? Why, why did I leave my father's house, to expose myself to greater distresses? [*Rasdy to weep.*]

Oak. I would do any thing for your sake; indeed I would. So, pray be comforted; and I'll think of some proper place to bestow you in.

Mrs. Oak. So, so!

Har. What place can be so proper as your own house?

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Oak. My dear Madam, I—I—

Mrs. Oak. My dear Madam! mighty well!

Oak. Hush! hark! what noise? No, nothing. But I'll be plain with you, madam; we may be interrupted. The family consideration I hinted at, is nothing else than my wife. She is a little unhappy in her temper, madam; and if you were to be admitted into the house, I don't know what might be the consequence.

Mrs. Oak. Very fine!

Har. My behaviour, Sir—

Oak. My dear life, it would be impossible for you to behave in such a manner, as not to give her suspicion.

Har. But if your nephew, Sir, took every thing upon himself—

Oak. Still that would not do, madam. Why, this very morning, when the letter came from your father, though I positively denied any knowledge of it, and Charles owned it, yet it was almost impossible to pacify her.

Mrs. Oak. The letter! How have I been bubbled!

Har. What shall I do? what will become of me?

Oak. Why, look ye, my dear madam, since my wife is so strong an objection, it is absolutely
im-

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impossible for me to take you into the house. Nay, if I had not known she was gone out, just before you came, I should be uneasy at your being here even now. So we must manage as well as we can: I'll take a private lodging for you a little way off, unknown to Charles or my wife, or any body; and if Mrs. Oakly should discover it at last, why the whole matter will light upon Charles, you know.

Mrs. Oak. Upon Charles!

Har. How unhappy is my situation! [*Weeping.*]
I am ruin'd for ever.

Oak. Ruin'd! not at all. Such a thing as this has happened to many a young lady before you, and all has been well again. Keep up your spirits! I'll contrive, if I possibly can, to visit you every day.

Mrs. Oak. [*Advancing.*] Will you so? O, Mr. Oakly! have I discovered you at last? I'll visit you, indeed. And you, my dear madam, I'll——

Har. Madam, I don't understand——

Mrs. Oak. I understand the whole affair, and have understood it for some time past. You shall have a private lodging, Miss! It is the finest place for you, I believe. How dare you look me in the face?

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Oak. For Heaven's sake, my love, don't be so violent. You are quite wrong in this affair; you don't know who you are talking to: That lady is a person of fashion.

Mrs. Oak. Fine fashion, indeed! To seduce other women's husbands!

Har. Dear madam, how can you imagine——

Oak. I tell you, my dear, this is the young lady that Charles——

Mrs. Oak. Mighty well! But that won't do, Sir! Did not I hear you lay the whole intrigue together? did not I hear your fine plot of throwing all the blame upon Charles?

Oak. Nay, be cool a moment. You must know, my dear, that the letter which came this morning, related to this lady.

Mrs. Oak. I know it.

Oak. And since that, it seems, Charles has been so fortunate as to——

Mrs. Oak. O, you deceitful man! that trick is too stale to pass again with me. It is plain now what you meant by your proposing to take her into the house this morning. But the gentlewoman could introduce herself, I see.

Oak. Fie, fie, my dear! she came on purpose to enquire for you.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Oak. For me! Better and better! Did not she watch her opportunity, and come to you just as I went out? But I am obliged to you for your visit, madam. It is sufficiently paid. Pray, don't let me detain you.

Oak. For shame, for shame, Mrs. Oakly! How can you be so absurd? Is this proper behaviour to a lady of her character!

Mrs. Oak. I have heard her character. Go, my fine run-away madam! Now you've eloped from your father, and run away from your aunt, go! You shan't stay here, I promise you.

Oak. Prithce, be quiet: You don't know what you are doing. She shall stay.

Mrs. Oak. She sha'n't stay a minute.

Oak. She shall stay a minute, an hour, a day, a week, a month, a year! 'Sdeath, madam, she shall stay for ever, if I chuse it.

Mrs. Oak. How!

Har. For Heaven's sake, Sir, let me go. I am frightened to death.

Oak. Don't be afraid, madam! She shall stay, I insist upon it.

Ruffet [within]. I tell you, Sir, I will go up. I am sure that the lady is here, and nothing shall hinder me.

G 4

Har.

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Har. O, my father, my father! [*Faints away.*]

Oak. See! she faints. [*Catching her.*] Ring the bell! who's there?

Mrs. Oak. What, take her in your arms too! I have no patience.

Enter Russet and servants.

Rus. Where is this——Ha! fainting! [*Running to her.*] O, my dear Harriot! my child! my child!

Oak. Your coming so abruptly shocked her spirits. But she revives. How do you, madam?

Har. [*To Russet.*] O, Sir!

Rus. O, my dear girl! how could you run away from your father, that loves you with such fondness! But I was sure I should find you here.

Mrs. Oak. There, there! Sure he should find her here! Did not I tell you so? Are not you a wicked man, to carry on such base underhand doings, with a gentleman's daughter?

Rus. Let me tell you, Sir, whatever you may think of the matter, I shall not easily put up with this behaviour. How durst you encourage my daughter to an elopement, and receive her in your house?

Mrs. Oak. There, mind that! the thing is as plain as the light.

Oak.

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Oak. I tell you, you misunderstand——

Ruf. Look you, Mr. Oakly, I shall expect satisfaction from your family for so gross an affront. Zounds, Sir, I am not to be us'd ill by any man in England!

Har. My dear Sir, I can assure you——

Ruf. Hold your tongue, girl! You'll put me in a passion.

Oak. Sir, this is all a mistake.

Ruf. A mistake! Did not I find her in your house?

Oak. Upon my soul, she has not been in the house above——

Mrs. Oak. Did not I hear you say you would take her a lodging? a private lodging?

Oak. Yes; but that——

Ruf. Has not this affair been carried on a long time, in spite of my teeth?

Oak. Sir, I never troubled myself——

Mrs. Oak. Never troubled yourself! Did not you insist on her staying in the house, whether I would or no?

Oak. No.

Ruf. Did not you send to meet her, when she came to town?

Oak. No.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Oak. Did not you deceive me about the letter this morning?

Oak. No, no, no. I tell you, no.

Mrs. Oak. Yes, yes, yes. I tell you, yes.

Ruf. Sha'n't I believe my own eyes?

Mrs. Oak. Sha'n't I believe my own ears?

Oak. I tell you, you are both deceived.

Ruf. Zounds, Sir, I'll have satisfaction.

Mrs. Oak. I'll stop these fine doings, I warrant you.

Oak. 'Sdeath, you will not let me speak! And you are both alike, I think. I wish you were married to one another, with all my heart.

Mrs. Oak. Mighty well! mighty well!

Ruf. I shall soon find a time to talk with you.

Oak. Find a time to talk! you have talked enough now for all your lives.

Mrs. Oak. Very fine! Come along, Sir! leave that lady with her father. Now she is in the properest hands. [Exit.

Oak. I wish I could leave you in his hands. [Going, returns.] I shall follow you, madam! One word with you, Sir! The height of your passion, and Mrs. Oakly's strange misapprehension of this whole affair, makes it impossible to explain matters to you at present. I will do it when you please, and how you please. [Exit.

Manent

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Manent Rufet and Harriot.

Ruf. Yes, yes; I'll have satisfaction.——So, madam! I have found you at last. You have made a fine confusion here.

Har. I have, indeed, been the innocent cause of a great deal of confusion.

Ruf. Innocent! what business had you to be running hither after——

Har. My dear Sir, you misunderstand the whole affair. I have not been in this house half an hour.

Ruf. Zounds, girl, don't put me in a passion! You know I love you; but a lie puts me in a passion! But come along; we'll leave this house directly.
[*Charles singing without.*] Heyday! what now?

After a noise without, enter Charles, drunk.

Char. But my wine neither nurses nor babies can bring,

And a big-bellied bottle's a mighty good thing.

[*Singing.*

What's here? a woman? Harriot! Impossible! My dearest, sweetest Harriot! I have been looking all over the town for you, and at last, when I was tired—and weary—and disappointed—why then the honest Major and I sat down together, to drink your health in pint bumpers. [*Running up to her.*

Ruf.

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Ruf. Stand off! How dare you take any liberties with my daughter before me? Zounds, Sir, I'll be the death of you!

Char. Ha, 'squire Ruffet too! You jolly old cock, how do you? But, Harriot! my dear girl! [*Taking hold of her.*] My life, my soul, my—

Ruf. Let her go, Sir! Come away, Harriot! Leave him this instant, or I'll tear you asunder.

[*Pulling her.*

Har. There needs no violence to tear me from a man who could disguise himself in such a gross manner, at a time when he knew I was in the utmost distress. [*Disengages herself, and exit with Ruffet.*

Charles solus.

Only hear me, Sir! Madam! My dear Harriot! Mr. Ruffet! Gone! She's gone; and 'egad in very ill humour, and in very bad company! I'll go after her. But hold! I shall only make it worse, as I did, now I recollect, once before. How the devil came they here? Who would have thought of finding her in my own house? My head turns round with conjectures. I believe I am drunk, very drunk; so 'egad, I'll e'en go and sleep myself sober, and then enquire the meaning of all this. For, I love Sue, and Sue loves me, &c.

[*Exit singing.*

A C T

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A C T IV.

SCENE, Oakly's.

Enter Mrs. Oakly and Major Oakly.

Major.

WELL, well! but, sister!
Mrs. Oak. I will know the truth of this matter. Why can't you tell me the whole story?

Maj. I'll tell you nothing. There's nothing to tell: You know the truth already. Besides, what have I to do with it? suppose there was a disturbance yesterday, what's that to me? was I here? it's no business of mine.

Mrs. Oak. Then why do you study to make it so? Am I not well assured that this mischief commenced at your house in the country? and now you are carrying it on in town.

Maj. This is always the case in family-squabbles. My brother has put you out of humour, and you chuse to vent your spleen upon me.

Mrs. Oak. Because I know that you are the
occasion

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occasion of his ill usage. Mr. Oakly never behaved in such a manner before.

Maj. I! am I the occasion of it?

Mrs. Oak. Yes, you. I am sure on't.

Maj. I am glad on't with all my heart.

Mrs. Oak. Indeed!

Maj. Ay, indeed; and you are the more obliged to me. Come, come, sister, it's time you should reflect a little. My brother is become a publick jest; and by-and-by, if this foolish affair gets wind, the whole family will be the subject of town-talk.

Mrs. Oak. And well it may, when you take so much pains to expose us. The little disquiets and uneasinesses of other families are kept secret; but here quarrels are fomented, and afterwards industriously made publick. And you, Sir, you have done all this: You are my greatest enemy!

Maj. Your truest friend, sister.

Mrs. Oak. But it's no wonder: You have no feelings of humanity, no sense of domestick happiness, no idea of tenderness or attachment to any woman.

Maj. No idea of plague and disquiet! No, no! And yet I can love a woman, for all that, heartily; as you say, tenderly. But then I always chuse a woman should shew a little love for me too.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Oak. Cruel insinuation! But I defy your malice! Mr. Oakly can have no doubt of my affection for him.

Maj. Nor I neither! and yet your affection, such as it is, has all the evil properties of aversion: You absolutely kill him with kindness. Why, what a life he leads! he serves for nothing but a mere whetstone of your ill-humour.

Mrs. Oak. Pray now, Sir——

Maj. The violence of your temper makes his house uncomfortable to him, poisons his meals, and breaks his rest.

Mrs. Oak. I beg, Major Oakly, that——

Maj. This it is to have a wife that doubts upon one! The least trifle kindles your suspicion; you take fire in an instant, and set the whole family in a blaze.

Mrs. Oak. This is beyond all patience. No, Sir, 'tis you are the incendiary; you are the cause of——I can't bear such——[*Ready to weep.*] From this instant, Sir, I forbid you my house. However Mr. Oakly may treat me himself, I'll never be made the sport of all his insolent relations. [*Exit.*]

Major Oakly solus.

Yes, yes, I knew I should be turn'd out of doors.

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doors. There she goes, back again to my brother directly. Poor gentleman! 'Slife, if he was but half the man that I am, I'd engage to keep her going to and fro all day, like a shuttlecock.

Enter Charles.

What, Charles!

Char. O, Major! have you heard of what happened after I left you yesterday?

Maj. Heard! Yes, yes; I have heard it plain enough. But, poor Charles! Ha, ha, ha, ha! What a scene of confusion! I would give the world to have been there.

Char. And I would give the world to have been any where else. Curfed fortune!

Maj. To come in so opportunely at the tail of an adventure! Was not your mistress mighty glad to see you? You were very fond of her, I dare say.

Char. I am upon the rack. Who can tell what rudeness I might offer her? I can remember nothing! I deserve to lose her: To make myself a beast! and at such a time too! O, fool, fool, fool!

Maj. Prithee, be quiet, Charles! Never vex yourself about nothing; this will all be made up the first time you see her.

Char.

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Char. I should dread to see her! And yet the not knowing where she is, distracts me. Her father may force her to marry Sir Harry Beagle immediately.

Maj. Not he, I promise you. She'd run plumb into your arms first, in spite of her father's teeth.

Char. But then her father's violence, and the mildness of her disposition——

Maj. Mildness! ridiculous! Trust to the spirit of the sex in her. I warrant you, like all the rest, she'll have perverseness enough not to do as her father would have her.

Char. Well, well! But then my behaviour to her; to expose myself in such a condition to her again! the very occasion of our former quarrel!

Maj. Quarrel! ha, ha, ha! what signifies a quarrel with a mistress? Why, the whole affair of making love, as they call it, is nothing but quarrelling and making it up again. They quarrel o'purpose to kiss and be friends.

Char. Then, indeed, things seemed to be taking a fortunate turn: To renew our difference at such a time! just when I had some reason to hope for a reconciliation. May wine be my poison, if ever I am drunk again!

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Maj. Ay, ay, so every man says the next morning.

Char. Where, where can she be? Her father would hardly have carried her back to Lady Free-love's, and he has no house in town himself, nor Sir Harry. I don't know what to think. I'll go in search of her, though I don't know where to direct myself.

Enter servant.

Serv. A gentleman, Sir, that calls himself Captain O'Cutter, desires to speak with you.

Char. Don't trouble me! I'll see nobody: I'm not at home!

Serv. The gentleman says he has very particular business, and he must see you.

Char. What's his name? who did you say?

Serv. Captain O'Cutter, Sir.

Char. Captain O'Cutter! I never heard of him before. Do you know any thing of him, Major?

Maj. Not I. But you hear he has particular business. I'll leave the room.

Char. He can have no business that need be a secret to you. Desire the captain to walk up.

[Exit Servant.]

What would I give if this unknown captain were to prove a messenger from my Harriot!

Enter

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Enter Captain O'Cutter.

O'Cut. Jontlemen, your sarvant! Is either of your names Charles Oakly, Esq.

Char. Charles Oakly, Sir, is my name, if you have any business with it.

O'Cut. Avast, avast, my dear! I have a little business with your name; but as I was to let nobody know it, I can't mention it, till you clear the decks, fait. *[Pointing to the Major.]*

Char. This gentleman, Sir, is my most intimate friend, and any thing that concerns me may be mentioned before him.

O'Cut. Oh, if he's your friend, my dear, we may do all above-board. It's only about your deciding a deferance with my Lord Trinket: He wants to shew you a little warm work; and as I was steering this way, he desired me to fetch you this letter. *[Giving a letter.]*

Maj. How, Sir, a challenge?

O'Cut. Yes, fait, a challenge. I am to be his lordship's second; and if you are fond of a hot birth, and will come along with that gentleman, we'll all go to it together, and make a little line of battle a-head of our own, my dear!

Char. *[Reading.]* Ha! what's this? This may be useful. *[Aside.]*

[Aside.]

Maj.

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Maj. Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you! A rare fellow this! [*Aside.*] Yes, yes, I'll meet all the good company: I'll be there in my waistcoat and pumps, and take a morning's breathing with you. Are you very fond of fighting, Sir?

O'Cut. Indeed and I am. I love it better than salt beef or biscuit. I love it better than grog.

Maj. But pray, Sir, how are you interested in this difference? Do you know what it is about?

O'Cut. Oh, the devil burn me, not I. What signifies what it's about, you know, so we do but tilt a little?

Maj. What! fight and not know for what?

O'Cut. When the signal's out for engaging, what signifies talking?

Maj. I fancy, Sir, a duel is a common breakfast with you. I'll warrant now, you have been engag'd in many such affairs.

O'Cut. Upon my shoul, and I have; sea or land, it's all one to little Terence O'Cutter. When I was last in Dublin, I fought one jontleman for cheating me out of a thousand pounds; I fought two of the Mermaid's crew about Sally Macguire; tree about politicks; and one about the playhouse in Smock-Alley. But, upon my fait, since I am in England, I have done nothing at all, at all!

Char.

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Char. This is lucky! but my transport will discover me. [*Aside.*] Will you be so kind, Sir, [*To O'Cutter.*] as to make my compliments to his lordship, and assure him that I shall do myself the honour of waiting on him.

O'Cut. Indeed, and I will. Arrah, my dear, won't you come too? [*To Major Oubly.*]

Maj. Depend upon't. We'll go thro' the whole exercise: Carte, tierce, and seagoon, captain!

Char. Now to get my intelligence. [*Aside.*] I think the time, Sir, his lordship appoints, in his letter, is—a—

O'Cut. You say right—six o'clock.

Char. And the place—a—a—is—I think, behind Montague-house?

O'Cut. No, my dear! avast! by the ring in Hyde-Park, fait. I settled it there myself, for fear of interruption.

Char. True, as you say, the ring in Hyde-Park: I had forgot. Very well, I'll not fail you, Sir.

O'Cut. Devil burn me, nor I. Upon my shoul, little Terence O'Cutter will see fair play, or he'll know the rason. And so, my dear, your servant.

[*Exit.*]

Maj. Ha, ha, ha! what a fellow! He loves fighting, like a game-cock.

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Char. Oh, uncle! the luckiest thing in the world!

Maj. What, to have the chance of being run through the body! I desire no such good fortune.

Char. With me joy, with me joy! I have found her; my dear girl, my Harriot! She is at an inn in Holborn, Major!

Maj. Ay! how do you know?

Char. Why this dear, delightful, charming, blundering captain, has deliver'd me a wrong letter.

Maj. A wrong letter!

Char. Yes, a letter from lord Trinket to lady Freelove.

Maj. The devil! What are the contents?

Char. The news I told you just now, that she's at an inn in Holborn: And, besides, an excuse from my lord, for not waiting on her ladyship this morning, according to his promise, as he shall be entirely taken up with his design upon Harriot.

Maj. So, so! a plot between the lord and the lady!

Char. What his plot is I don't know, but I shall beg leave to be made a party in it: So perhaps his lordship and I may meet, and *decide our deferance*, as the captain calls it, before to-morrow morning. There! read, read, man! [*Giving the letter.*]

Maj. [*reading.*] Um—um—um——Very fine! And what do you propose doing?

Char.

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Char. To go thither immediately.

Maj. Then you shall take me with you. Who knows what his lordship's designs may be? I begin to suspect foul play.

Char. No, no; pray mind your own business. If I find there is any need of your assistance, I'll send for you.

Maj. You'll manage this affair like a boy now: Go on rashly, with noise and bustle, and fury, and get yourself into another scrape.

Char. No, no; let me alone; I'll go *incog.* leave my chariot at some distance; proceed prudently, and take care of myself, I warrant you. I did not imagine that I should ever rejoice at receiving a challenge; but this is the most fortunate accident that could possibly have happened. B'ye, b'ye, uncle!
[*Exit hastily.*]

Major Oakly solus.

I don't half approve this; and yet I can hardly suspect his lordship of any very deep designs neither. Charles may easily outwit him. Hark ye, William!

[*As seeing a servant at some distance.*]

Enter servant.

Serv. Sir!

Maj. Where's my brother?

H 4

Serv.

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Serv. In his study, alone, Sir.

Maj. And how is he, William?

Serv. Pretty well, I believe, Sir.

Maj. Ay, ay, but is he in good humour, or——

Serv. I never meddle in family affairs, not I, Sir.

[*Exit.*

Major Oakly solus.

Well said, William! No bad hint for me, perhaps! what a strange world we live in! No two people in it love one another better than my brother and sister, and yet the bitterest enemies could not torment each other more heartily. Ah, if he had but half my spirit! And yet he don't want it neither. But I know his temper: He pieces out the matter with maxims, and scraps of philosophy, and odds and ends of sentences: I must live in peace——Patience is the best remedy——any thing for a quiet life—and so on! However, yesterday, to give him his due, he behaved like a man. Keep it up, brother! keep it up! or it's all over with you. Since mischief is on foot, I'll e'en set it forwards on all sides. I'll in to him directly, read him one of my morning-lectures, and persuade him, if I possibly can, to go out with me immediately; or work him up to some open
act

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act of rebellion against the sovereign authority of his lady-wife. Zounds, brother, rant, and roar, and rave, and turn the house out of the window. If I was a husband! 'Sdeath, what a pity it is that nobod'y knows how to manage a wife, but a batchelor. [Exit.

SCENE changes to the Bull and Gate Inn.

Harriet sola.

What will become of me? My father is enraged, and deaf to all remonstrances; and here I am to remain, by his positive orders, to receive this booby baronet's odious addresses. Among all my distresses, I must confess that Charles's behaviour yesterday is not the least. So wild! so given up to excesses! And yet, I am ashamed to own it even to myself, I love him; and death itself shall not prevail on me to give my hand to Sir Harry. But here he comes! What shall I do with him?

Enter Sir Harry Beagle.

Sir H. Your servant, miss! What, not speak? Bashful mayhap; why then I will. Look'e, miss, I am a man of few words. What signifies haggling? It looks just like a dealer. What d'ye think of me
for

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for a husband? I am a tight young fellow—sound wind and limb—free from all natural blemishes, run all over, damme.

Har. Sir, I don't understand you. Speak English, and I'll give you an answer.

Sir H. English! why so I do, and good plain English too. What d'ye think of me for a husband? That's English, e'nt it? I know none of your French lingo, none of your *parlyvoos*, not I. What d'ye think of me for a husband? The 'squire says you shall marry me.

Har. What shall I say to him? I had best be civil. [*Aside.*] I think, Sir, you deserve a much better wife, and beg—

Sir H. Better! No, no, though you're so knowing, I'm not to be taken in so. You're a fine thing: Your points are all good.

Har. Sir Harry! sincerity is above all ceremony. Excuse me, if I declare, I never will be your wife, and if you have a real regard for me, and my happiness, you will give up all pretension to me. Shall I beseech you, Sir, to persuade my father not to urge a marriage, to which I am determined never to consent.

Sir H. Ha! how! what! be off! Why, it's a match, miss! it's done and done on both sides.

Har. For Heaven's sake, Sir, withdraw your claim

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claim to me. I never can be prevailed on—indeed I can't.

Sir H. What, make a match and then draw stakes! That's doing of nothing—Play or pay, all the world over.

Har. Let me prevail on you, Sir! I am determined not to marry you, at all events.

Sir H. But your father's determin'd you shall, miss! so the odds are on my side. I am not quite sure of my horse, but I have the rider hollow.

Har. Your horse, Sir!—d'ye take me for—but I forgive you. I beseech you come into my proposal. It will be better for us both in the end.

Sir H. I can't be off.

Har. Let me intreat you.

Sir H. I tell you, it's impossible.

Har. Pray, pray do, Sir.

Sir H. I can't, damme.

Har. I beseech you.

Sir H. [*Whistles.*]

Har. How! laugh'd at?

Sir H. "Will you marry me, dear Ally, Ally
"Croker?" [*Singing.*]

Har. Marry you? I had rather be married to a
slave, a wretch—You! [*Walks about.*]

Sir H. A fine going thing. She has a deal of
foot,

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foot, treads well upon her pasterns, goes above her ground——

Har. Peace, wretch! do you talk to me as if I were your horse.

Sir H. Horse! why not speak of my horse! If your fine ladies had half as many good qualities, they would be much better bargains.

Har. And if their wretches of husbands liked them half so well as they do their horses, they would lead better lives.

Sir H. Mayhap so: But what signifies talking to you? The 'squire shall know your tricks! he'll doctor you! I'll go and talk to him.

Har. Go any where, so that you go from me.

Sir H. He'll break you in! If you won't go in a snaffle, you must be put in a curb. He'll break you, damme!
[Exit.]

Harriot sola.

A wretch! But I was to blame to suffer his brutal behaviour to ruffle my temper. I could expect nothing else from him, and he is below my anger. How much trouble has this odious fellow caused both to me and my poor father! I never disobeyed him before, and my denial now makes him quite unhappy. In any thing else I would be
all

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all submission; and even now, while I dread his rage, my heart bleeds for his uneasiness. I wish I could resolve to obey him!

Enter Russet.

Rus. Are not you a sad girl! a perverse, stubborn, obstinate——

Har. My dear Sir——

Rus. Look ye, Harriot, don't speak. You'll put me in a passion. Will you have him? answer me that. Why don't the girl speak? Will you have him?

Har. Dearest Sir, there is nothing in the world else——

Rus. Why, there! there! look ye there! Zounds, you shall have him! hussy, you shall have him! you shall marry him to-night! Did not you promise to receive him civilly? How came you to affront him?

Har. Sir, I did receive him very civilly; but his behaviour was so insolent and insupportable——

Rus. Insolent! zounds, I'll blow his brains out. Insolent to my dear Harriot! a rogue! a villain! a scoundrel! I'll——but it's a lie! I know it's a lie! he durst not behave insolent. Will you have him? answer me that. Will you have him? Zounds, you shall have him!

Har.

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Har. If you have any love for me, Sir——

Ruf. Love for you! You know I love you; you know your poor fond father doats on you to madness: I would not force you, if I did not love you. Don't I want you to be happy? But I know what you would have: You want young Oakly, a rakehell, drunken——

Har. Release me from Sir Harry, and if I ever marry against your consent, renounce me for ever.

Ruf. I *will* renounce you, unless you'll have Sir Harry.

Har. Consider, my dear Sir, you'll make me miserable. I would die to please you, but cannot prostitute my hand to a man my heart abhors. Absolve me from this hard command, and in every thing else it will be happiness to obey you.

Ruf. You'll break my heart, Harriot, you'll break my heart. Make you miserable! don't I want to make you happy? Is not he the richest man in the county? That will make you happy. Don't all the pale-faced girls in the country long to get him? and yet you are so perverse, and wayward, and stubborn——Zounds, you shall have him!

Har. For heaven's sake, Sir——

Ruf. Hold your tongue, Harriot! I'll hear none

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none of your nonsense. You shall have him, I tell you, you shall have him! He shall marry you this very night. I'll go for a licence and a parson immediately. Zounds, why do I stand arguing with you? an't I your father? have not I a right to dispose of you? You shall have him!

Har. Sir!

Ruf. I won't hear a word. You shall have him! *[Exit.*

Harriet sola.

Sir! hear me! but one word! He will not hear me, and is gone to prepare for this odious marriage. I will die before I consent to it. You *shall* have him! Oh, that fathers would enforce their commands by better arguments! And yet I pity him, while he afflicts me. He upbraided me with Charles's wildness and intemperance; alas! but too justly! I see that he is wedded to his excesses; and I ought to conquer an affection for him, which will only serve to make me unhappy.

Enter Charles in a frock, &c.

Ha! what do I see?

[Screaming.

Char. Peace, my love! my dear life, make no noise! I have been hovering about the house this hour. I just now saw your father and Sir Harry

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go out, and have seized this precious opportunity to throw myself at your feet.

Har. You have given yourself, Sir, a great deal of needless trouble. I did not expect or hope for the favour of such a visit.

Char. Oh, my dear Harriot, your words and looks cut me to the soul! You can't imagine what I suffer, and have suffer'd, since last night: And yet I have in some fond moments flatter'd myself, that the service I was so fortunate as to do you at Lady Frelove's, would plead a little in my favour.

Har. You may remember, Sir, that you took a very early opportunity of cancelling that obligation.

Char. I do remember it with shame and despair. But may I perish, if my joy at having delivered you from a villain, was not the cause! My transport more than half intoxicated me, and wine made an easy conquest over me. I tremble to think lest I should have behaved in such a manner, as you cannot pardon.

Har. Whether I pardon you or no, Sir, is a matter of mighty little consequence.

Char. Oh, my Harriot! upbraid me, reproach me, do any thing but look and talk with that air of coldness and indifference. Must I lose you for one offence?

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offence? when my soul doats on you, when I love you to distraction!

Har. Did it appear like love, your conduct yesterday? to lose yourself in riot, when I was exposed to the greatest distresses!

Char. I feel, I feel my shame, and own it.

Har. You confess that you don't know in what manner you behaved. Ought not I to tremble at the very thoughts of a man, devoted to a vice which renders him no longer a judge or master of his own conduct?

Char. Abandon me, if ever I am guilty of it again. Oh, Harriot! I am distracted with ten thousand fears and apprehensions of losing you for ever. The chambermaid, whom I bribed to admit me to you, told me, that when the two gentlemen went out, they talked of a licence. What am I to think? Is it possible that you can resign yourself to Sir Harry Beagle? [*Harriot pauses.*] Can you then consent to give your hand to another? No; let me once more deliver you. Let us seize this lucky moment! My chariot stands at the corner of the next street. Let me gently force you, while their absence allows it, and convey you from the brutal violence of a constrained marriage.

Har. No! I will wait the event, be it what it
VOL. I. I may.

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may. Oh, Charles, I am too much inclined—They sha'n't force me to marry Sir Harry. But your behaviour! Not half an hour ago, my father reproached me with the looseness of your character.

[Weeping.]

Char. I see my folly, and am ashamed of it. You have reclaim'd me, Harriot! On my soul, you have. If all women were as attentive as yourself to the morals of their lovers, a libertine would be an uncommon character. But let me persuade you to leave this place, while you may. Major Oakly will receive us at his house with pleasure. I am shock'd at the thoughts of what your stay here may reserve you to.

Har. No; I am determin'd to remain. To leave my father again, to go off openly with a man, of whose libertine character he has himself so lately been a witness, would justify his anger, and impeach my reputation.

Char. Fool! fool! How unhappy have I made myself! Consider, my Harriot, the peculiarity of your situation; besides, I have reason to fear other designs against you.

Har. From other designs I can be no where so secure as with my father.

Char. Time flies. Let me persuade you!

Har.

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Har. I am resolved to stay here.

Char. You distract me. For Heaven's sake—

Har. I will not think of it.

Char. Consider, my angel!

Har. I do consider, that your conduct has made it absolutely improper for me to trust myself to your care.

Char. My conduct! Vexation! 'Sdeath! But then, my dear Harriot, the danger you are in, the necessity—

Enter Chambermaid.

Cham. Oh law, ma'am! such a terrible accident! As sure as I am here, there's a press-gang has seiz'd the two gemmin, and is carrying them away, thof so be one an'em says as how he's a knight and baronight, and that t'other's a 'squire and a house-keeper.

Har. Seiz'd by a press-gang! impossible.

Char. Oh, now the design comes out. But I'll balk his lordship.

Chamb. Lack-a-daisy, ma'am, what can we do? There is master, and John Offler, and Bootcatcher, all gone a'ter 'em. There is such an uproar as never was!

[*Exit.*

Har. If I thought this was your contrivance, Sir, I would never speak to you again.

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Char. I would sooner die than be guilty of it. This is lord Trinket's doing, I am sure. I knew he had some scheme in agitation, by a letter I intercepted this morning.

Har. Ah! [*Screams.*]

Char. Ha! here he comes! Nay, then, it's plain enough. Don't be frightened, my love! I'll protect you. But now I must desire you to follow my directions.

Enter Lord Trinket.

L. Trink. Now, madam! Pox on't, he here again! Nay, then! [*drawing.*] Come, Sir! You're unarmed, I see. Give up the lady: Give her up, I say; or I am through you in a twinkling.

[*Going to make a pass at Charles.*]

Char. Keep your distance, my lord! I have arms. [*Producing a pistol.*] If you come a foot nearer, you have a brace of balls thro' your lordship's head.

L. Trink. How? what's this? pistols!

Char. At your lordship's service. Sword and pistol, my lord! Those, you know, are our weapons. If this misses, I have the fellow to't in my pocket. Don't be frightened, madam! His lordship has removed your friends and relations, but he will

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will take great care of you. Shall I leave you with him?

Har. Cruel Charles! You know I *must* go with you now.

Char. A little away from the door, if your lordship pleases. [*Waving his hand.*]

L. Trink. Sir! 'Sdeath! Madam!

Char. A little more round, my lord! [*Waving.*]

L. Trink. But, Sir! Mr. Oakly!

Char. I have no leisure to talk with your lordship now. A little more that way, if you please.

[*Waving.*] You know where I live: If you have any commands for Miss Ruffet, you will hear of her too at my house. Nay, keep back, my lord!

[*Presenting.*] Your lordship's most obedient humble servant! [*Exit with Har.*]

Manet Lord Trinket.

[*Looking after him, and pausing for a short time.*]

—I cut a mighty ridiculous figure here, 'pon honour. So, I have been concerting this deep scheme, merely to serve him. Oh, the devil take such intrigues, and all silly country girls, that can give up a man of quality and figure, for a fellow that nobody knows! [*Exit.*]

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A C T V.

SCENE, *Lady Freelove's.*

Enter Lord Trinket, Lady Freelove with a letter, and Captain O'Cutter.

Lord Trinket.

WAS ever any thing so unfortunate? Pox on't, captain, how could you make such a strange blunder?

O'Cut. I never tought of a blunder. I was to daliver two letters, and if I gave them one a-picce I tought it was all one, fait.

L. Free. And so, my lord, the ingenious captain gave the letter intended for me to young Oakly, and here he has brought me a challenge.

L. Trink. Ridiculous! never was any thing so *mal-a-propos*! Did not you read the direction, captain?

O'Cut. Who, me! Devil burn me, not I. I never rade at all.

L. Trink. 'Sdeath, how provoking! When I had secur'd the servants, and got all the people out of the way; when every thing was *en train*!

L. Free.

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L. Free. Nay, never despair, my lord! Things have happened unluckily, to be sure; and yet, I think I could hit upon a method to set every thing right again.

L. Trink. How, how, my dear lady Freeclove, how?

L. Free. Suppose, then, your lordship was to go and deliver these country gentlemen from their confinement; make them believe it was a plot of young Oakly's to carry off my niece; and so make a merit of your own services with the father.

L. Trink. Admirable! I'll about it immediately.

O'Cut. Has your lordship any occasion for my service, in this expedition?

L. Trink. Oh, no: Only release me these people, and then keep out of the way, dear captain!

O'Cut. With all my heart, fait! But you are all wrong: This will not signify a brass farthing. If you would let me alone, I would give him a salt eel, I warrant you. But, upon my credit, there's nothing to be done without a little tilting. [*Exit.*]

L. Free. Ha, ha! poor captain!

L. Trink. But where shall I carry them, when I have deliver'd them?

L. Free. To Mr. Oakly's, by all means. You may be sure my niece is there.

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L. Trink. To Mr. Oakly's! Why, does your ladyship consider, 'tis going directly into the fire of the enemy? Throwing the *dementi* full in their teeth?

L. Free. So much the better. Face your enemies: Nay, you shall outface them too. Why, where's the difference between truths and untruths, if you do but stick close to the point? Falshood would scarce ever be detected, if we had confidence enough to support it.

L. Trink. Nay, I don't want *bronze* upon occasion: But, to go amongst a whole troop of people, sure to contradict every word I say, is so dangerous——

L. Free. To leave Ruslet alone amongst them, would be ten times more dangerous. You may be sure that Oakly's will be the first place he will go to after his daughter; where, if you don't accompany him, he will be open to all their suggestions. They'll be all in one story, and nobody there to contradict them: And then their dull truth would triumph; which must not be. No, no; positively, my lord, you must battle it out.

L. Trink. Well! I'll go, 'pon honour; and, if I could depend on your ladyship, as a *corps de reserve*——

L. Free.

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L. Free. I'll certainly meet you there. Tush! my lord, there's nothing in it. It's hard, indeed, if two persons of condition can't bear themselves out against such trumpery folks as the family of the Oaklys.

L. Trink. Odious low people! But I lose time. I must after the captain: And so, till we meet at Mr. Oakly's, I kiss your ladyship's hands. You won't fail me?

L. Free. You may depend on me.

[*Exit L. Trink.*]

Lady Free love, sola.

So, here is fine work! This artful little hussy has been too much for us all. Well! what's to be done? Why, when a woman of fashion gets into a scrape, nothing but a fashionable assurance can get her out of it again. I'll e'en go boldly to Mr. Oakly's, as I have promised; and, if it appears practicable, I will forward lord Trinket's match; but if I find that matters have taken another turn, his lordship must excuse me. In that case, I'll fairly drop him, seem a perfect stranger to all his intentions, and give my visit an air of congratulation to my niece and any other husband, which fortune, her wise father, or her ridiculous self, may have provided for her.

[*Exit.*]

Scene

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Scene changes to Mrs. Oakly's dressing-room.

Mrs. Oakly, sola.

This is worse and worse ! He never held me so much in contempt before : To go out without so much as speaking to me, or taking the least notice ! I am obliged to the Major for this. How could he take him out ? and how could Mr. Oakly go with him ?

Enter Toilet.

Mrs. Oak. Well, Toilet !

Toil. My master is not come back yet, ma'am.

Mrs. Oak. Where is he gone ?

Toil. I don't know, I can assure your ladyship.

Mrs. Oak. Why don't you know ? You know nothing ! But I warrant, you know well enough, if you would tell : You shall never persuade me but you knew of Mr. Oakly's going out to-day.

Toil. I wish I may die, ma'am, upon my honour, and I protest to your ladyship, I knew nothing in the world of the matter, no more than the child unborn. There is Mr. Paris, my master's gentleman, knows——

Mrs. Oak. What does he know ?

Toil. That I know nothing at all of the matter.

Mrs. Oak. Where is Paris ? what is he doing ?

Toil.

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Tail. He is in my master's room, ma'am.

Mrs. Oak. Bid him come here.

Tail. Yes, ma'am. [Exit.]

Mrs. Oak. He is certainly gone after this young flirt. His confidence, and the Major's insolence, provoke me beyond expression.

Re-enter Tailor with Paris.

Where's your master?

Par. Il est fortie.

Mrs. Oak. Where is he gone?

Par. Ah, madame! *Je n'en sçai rien.* I know nothing of it.

Mrs. Oak. Nobody knows any thing. Why did not you tell me he was going out?

Par. I dress him; *Je ne m'en sçavois pas du plus.* He go where he will; I have no business wis it.

Mrs. Oak. Yes, you should have told me; that was your business: And if you don't mind your business better, you sha'n't stay here, I can tell you, Sir.

Par. *Voilà quelque chose d'extraordinaire!*

Mrs. Oak. Don't stand jabbering and strutting your shoulders; but go, and enquire—go—and bring me word where he is gone.

Par. I don't know vat I am do: I'll ask-a Jean.

Act.

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Mrs. Oak. Bid John come here.

Par. De tout mon cœur. Jean! ici! Jean!
 Speak mi ladi! [Exit.

Mrs. Oak. Impudent fellow! his insolent gravity and indifference are insupportable. Toilet!

Toil. Ma'am.

Mrs. Oak. Where's John? Why don't he come? Why do you stand with your hands before you? Why don't you fetch him?

Toil. Yes, ma'am: I'll go this minute. Oh! here! John! my lady wants you.

Enter John.

Mrs. Oak. Where's your master?

John. Gone out, madam.

Mrs. Oak. Why did not you go with him?

John. Because he went out in the Major's chariot, madam.

Mrs. Oak. Where did they go to?

John. To the Major's, I suppose, madam.

Mrs. Oak. Suppose! Don't you know?

John. I believe so; but can't tell for certain, indeed, madam.

Mrs. Oak. Believe! and suppose! and don't know! and can't tell! You are all fools! Go about your business! [*John going.*] Come here! [*Returns.*]

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turns.] Go to the Major's—No; it does not signify. Go along! [*John going.*] Yes, hark'ye! [*Returns.*] Go to the Major's, and see if your master is there.

John. Give your compliments, madam?

Mrs. Oak. My compliments, blockhead! Get along! [*John going.*] Come hither! [*Returns.*] Can't you go to the Major's, and bring me word if Mr. Oakly is there, without taking any further notice?

John. Yes, ma'am!

Mrs. Oak. Well! why don't you go, then? And make haste back. And, d'ye hear? John!

[*John going, returns.*]

John. Madam.

Mrs. Oak. Nothing at all; go along! [*John goes.*] How uneasy Mr. Oakly makes me!—Hark'ye! John!

[*John returns.*]

John. Madam.

Mrs. Oak. Send the porter here.

John. Yes, Madam. [*Exit John.*]

Toil. So! she's in a rare humour! I shall have a fine time on't. [*Aside.*]—Will your ladyship chuse to dress?

Mrs. Oak. Prithce, creature, don't tease me with your fiddle-faddle stuff: I have a thousand things

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things to think of. Where is the porter? Why has not that booby sent him? What is the meaning—

Re-enter John.

John. Madam, my master is this moment returned with Major Oakly, and my young master, and the lady that was here yesterday.

Mrs. Oak. Very well. [*Exit John.*] Returned! Yes, truly, he is returned; and in a very extraordinary manner. This is setting me at open defiance: But I'll go down, and shew them I have too much spirit to endure such usage. [*Going.*] Or, stay; I'll not go amongst his company; I'll go out. Toilet!

Toil. Ma'am.

Mrs. Oak. Order the coach; I'll go out. [*Toilet going.*] Toilet! stay! I'll e'en go down to them. No. Toilet!

Toil. Ma'am.

Mrs. Oak. Order me a boil'd chicken: I'll not go down to dinner. I'll dine in my own room; and sup there: I'll not see his face these three days. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene changes to another room.

Enter Oakly, Major Oakly, Charles, and Harriot.

Char. My dear Harriot, do not make yourself so uneasy.

Har.

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Har. Alas! I have too much cause for my uneasiness. Who knows what that vile Lord has done with my father?

Oak. Be comforted, madam. We shall soon hear of Mr. Russet; and all will be well, I dare say.

Har. You are too good to me, Sir! But, I can assure you, I am not a little concerned on your account, as well as my own; and, if I did not flatter myself with the hopes of explaining every thing to Mrs. Oakly's satisfaction, I should never forgive myself for having disturbed the peace of such a worthy family.

Maj. Don't mind that, madam; they'll be very good friends again: This is nothing among married people. 'Sdeath, here she is! No; it's only Mrs. Toilet.

Enter Toilet.

Oak. Well, Toilet, what now? [*Toil. whispers.*] Not well? can't come down to dinner? wants to see me above? Hark'ye, brother; what shall I do?

Maj. If you go, you're undone.

Har. Go, Sir! go to Mrs. Oakly. Indeed you had better.

Maj. 'Sdeath, brother, don't budge a foot! This is all fractiousness and ill-humour.

Oak.

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Oak. No; I'll not go. Tell her I have company, and we shall be glad to see her here.

[*Exit Tail.*]

Maj. That's right.

Oak. Suppose I go, and watch how she proceeds.

Maj. What d'ye mean? You would not go to her! Are you mad?

Oak. By no means go to her: I only want to know how she takes it. I'll lie *perdue* in my study, and observe her motions.

Maj. I don't like this pitiful ambuscade-work; this bush-fighting. Why can't you stay here? Ay, ay! I know how it will be: She'll come bounce in upon you, with a torrent of anger and passion, or, if necessary, a whole flood of tears, and carry all before her at once.

Oak. You shall find that you're mistaken, Major. Don't imagine, because I wish not to be void of humanity, that I am destitute of resolution. Now I am convinc'd I'm in the right, I'll support that right with ten times your steadiness.

Maj. You talk this well, brother!

Oak. I'll *do* it well, brother!

Maj. If you don't, you're undone.

Oak. Never fear, never fear!

[*Exit.*]

Maj. Well, Charles!

Char.

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Char. I can't bear to see my Harriot so uneasy. I'll go immediately in quest of Mr. Ruffet: Perhaps I may learn at the inn, where his lordship's ruffians have carried him.

Ruf. [*Without.*] Here? yes, yes; I know she's here, well enough. Come along, Sir Harry, come along.

Har. He's here! my father! I know his voice. Where is Mr. Oakly? Oh, now, good Sir, [*to the Major.*] do but pacify him, and you'll be a friend indeed.

Enter Ruffet, Lord Trinket, and Sir Harry Beaupre.

L. Trink. There, Sir! I told you it was so.

Ruf. Ay, ay, it is too plain. Oh, you provoking slut! Elopement after elopement! and, at last, to have your father carried off by violence! to endanger my life! Zounds, I am so angry, I dare not trust myself within reach of you!

Char. I can assure you, Sir, that your daughter is entirely——

Ruf. You assure me? You are the fellow that has perverted her mind; that has set my own child against me!

Char. If you will but hear me, Sir——

Ruf. I won't hear a word you say! I'll have my daughter. I won't hear a word!

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Maj. Nay, Mr. Ruffet, hear reason. If you will but have patience——

Ruf. I'll have no patience. I'll have my daughter; and she shall marry Sir Harry to-night.

L. Trink. That is dealing rather too much *en cavalier* with me, Mr. Ruffet, 'pon honour. You take no notice of my pretensions, though my rank and family——

Ruf. What care I for rank and family! I don't want to make my daughter a rantipole woman of quality. I'll give her to whom I please. Take her away, Sir Harry! She shall marry you to-night.

Har. For Heaven's sake, Sir, hear me but a moment.

Ruf. Hold your tongue, girl! Take her away, Sir Harry, take her away.

Char. It must not be.

Maj. Only three words, Mr. Ruffet——

Ruf. Why don't the booby take her!

Sir H. Hold hard! hold hard! You are all on a wrong scent: Hold hard! I say, hold hard! Hark ye, squire Ruffet.

Ruf. Well! what now?

Sir H. It was proposed, you know, to match me with Miss Harriot; but she can't take kindly to me. When one has made a bad bet, it is best to hedge off, you know; and so I have e'en swopped her
her

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her with lord Trinket here for his brown horse Nabob, that he bought of lord Whistle-Jacket, for fifteen hundred guineas.

Ruf. Swopped her? swopped my daughter for a horse? Zounds, Sir, what d'ye mean?

Sir Har. Mean? why I mean to be off, to be sure! It won't do; I tell you, it won't do; first of all, I knocked up myself and my horses, when they took for London; and now I have been stewed aboard a tender: I have wasted three stone at least. If I could have rid my match, it would not have grieved me. And so, as I said before, I have swopped her for Nabob.

Ruf. The devil take Nabob, and yourself, and lord Trinket, and——

L. Trink. *Pardon! je vous demande pardon, monsieur Ruffet, 'pon honour!*

Ruf. Death and the devil! I shall go distracted. My daughter plotting against me! the——

Maj. Come, Mr. Ruffet, I am your man, after all. Give me but a moment's hearing, and I'll engage to make peace between you and your daughter, and throw the blame where it ought to fall most deservedly.

Sir Har. Ay, ay, that's right. Put the saddle on the right horse, my buck!

Ruf. Well, Sir! what d'ye say? speak! I don't know what to do!

Maj. I'll speak the truth, let who will be offended by it: I have proof presumptive and positive for you, Mr. Ruffet. From his lordship's behaviour at lady Freelove's, when my nephew rescued her, we may fairly conclude that he would stick at no measures to carry his point: There's proof presumptive. But, Sir, we can give you proof positive too; proof under his lordship's own hand, that he, likewise, was the contriver of the gross affront that has just been offered you.

Ruf. Hey! how!

L. Trink. Every syllable romance, 'pon honour.

Maj. Gospel, every word on't.

Char. This letter will convince you, Sir. In consequence of what happened at lady Freelove's, his lordship thought fit to send me a challenge; but the messenger blundered, and gave me this letter instead of it. [*Giving the letter.*] I have the case which enclosed it in my pocket.

L. Trink. Forgery, from beginning to end, 'pon honour.

Maj. Truth, upon my honour. But read, Mr. Ruffet; read and be convinced.

Ruf. Let me see—let me see—[*Reading.*]—Um—um—um—so! so! —um—um—um—Damnation!

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nation!—*Wish me success—obedient slave—*
Trinket.—Fire and fury! how dare you do this?

L. Trink. When you are cool, Mr. Ruffet, I will explain this matter to you.

Ruf. Cool? 'Death and hell! I'll never be cool again! I'll be revenged! So my Harriot, my dear girl, is innocent at last! Say so, Harriot; tell me you are innocent. [*Embracing her.*]

Har. I am, indeed, Sir! and happy beyond expression at your being convinced of it.

Ruf. I am glad on't—I am glad on't—I believe you, Harriot! you were always a good girl.

Maj. So she is, an excellent girl! worth a regiment of such lords and baronets! Come, Sir, finish every thing handsomely at once: Come, Charles will have a handsome fortune.

Ruf. Marry! she durst not do it.

Maj. Consider, Sir, they have long been fond of each other; old acquaintance—faithful lovers—turtles—and may be very happy.

Ruf. Well, well; since things are so—I love my girl—Hark'ye, young Oakly, if you don't make her a good husband, you'll break my heart, you rogue.

Maj. I'll cut his throat, if he don't.

Char. Do not doubt it, Sir! my Harriot has reformed me altogether.

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Ruf. Has she? why then—there—Heaven blefs you both—there—now there's an end on't.

Sir Har. So, my lord, you and I are both distanced: A hollow thing, damme.

L. Trink. *N'importe.*

Sir Har. [*Aside.*] Now this stake is drawn, my lord may be for hedging off, mayhap. Ecod! I'll go to Jack Speed's, and secure Nabob, and be out of town in an hour. Soho! Lady Freelove! yoics! [*Exit.*]

Enter Lady Freelove.

L. Free. My dear Miss Russet, you'll excuse——

Char. Mrs. Oakly, at your ladyship's service.

L. Free. Married?

Har. Not yet, madam; but my father has been so good as to give his consent.

L. Free. I protest, I am prodigiously glad of it. My dear, I give you joy! and you Mr. Oakly! I wish you joy, Mr. Russet, and all the good company! for I think they are most of them parties concerned.

Maj. How easy, impudent, and familiar! [*Aside.*]

L. Free. Lord Trinket here too! I vow I did not see your lordship before.

L. Trink. Your ladyship's most obedient slave.

[*Bowing.*]

L. Free.

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L. Free. You seem grave, my lord ! Come, come, I know there has been some difference between you and Mr. Oakly : You must give me leave to be a mediator in this affair.

L. Trink. Here has been a small *fracas*, to be sure, madam ! We are all blown, 'pon honour.

L. Free. Blown ! What do you mean, my lord ?

L. Trink. Nay, your ladyship knows that I never mind these things, and I know that they never discompose your ladyship : But things have happened a little *en travers* : The little billet that I sent your ladyship has fallen into the hands of that gentleman [*pointing to Char.*] ; and so, there has been a little *brauillerie* about it ; that's all.

L. Free. You talk to me, my lord, in a very extraordinary stile : If you have been guilty of any misbehaviour, I am sorry for it ; but your ill conduct can fasten no imputation on me. Miss Russet will justify me sufficiently.

Maj. Had not your ladyship better appeal to my friend Charles here ? The letter, Charles ! out with it this instant !

Char. Yes, I have the credentials of her ladyship's integrity in my pocket. Mr. Russet, the letter you read a little while ago, was inclosed in this cover ; which also I now think it my duty to put into your hands.

Ruf. [*Reading.*] *To the right honourable Lady Freelow.* 'Sdeath and hell! and now I recollect, the letter itself was pieced with scraps of French, and *madam*, and *your ladyship*. Fire and fury! madam, how came you to use me so? I am obliged to you then, for the insult that has been offered me.

L. Free. What is all this? Your obligations to me, Mr. Ruffet, are of a nature that——

Ruf. Fine obligations! I dare say I am partly obliged to you too for the attempt on my daughter by that thing of a lord yonder, at your house. Zounds, madam, these are injuries never to be forgiven! They are the grossest affronts to me and my family——All the world shall know them! Zounds! I'll——

L. Free. Mercy on me! how boisterous are these country gentlemen! Why really, Mr. Ruffet, you rave like a man in Bedlam; I'm afraid you'll beat me: And then you swear most abominably! How can you be so vulgar? I see the meaning of this low malice: But the reputations of women of quality are not so easily impeached; my rank places me above the scandal of little people, and I shall meet such petty insolence with the greatest ease and tranquillity. But you and your simple girl will be the sufferers: I had some thoughts of introducing her into the first company; but now,
madam,

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madam, I shall neither receive nor return your visits, and will entirely withdraw my protection from the ordinary part of the family. *[Exit.*

Ruf. Zounds! what impudence! That's worse than all the rest.

L. Trink. Fine presence of mind, faith! the true French *nonchalance*. But, good folks, why such a deal of rout and *tapage* about nothing at all? If mademoiselle Harriot had rather be Mrs. Oakly than Lady Trinket—Why—I wish her joy, that's all. Mr. Ruffet, I wish you joy of your son-in-law—Mr. Oakly, I wish you joy of the lady—and you, madam, *[to Harriot,]* of the gentleman—And, in short, I wish you all joy of one another, 'pon honour. *[Exit.*

Ruf. There's a fine fellow of a lord now! The devil's in your London folks of the first fashion, as you call them. They will rob you of your estate, debauch your daughter, or lie with your wife; and all, as if they were doing you a favour—'pon honour! *[Bell rings violently.*

Maj. Hey! what now?

Enter Oakly.

Oak. D'ye hear, Major, d'ye hear?

Maj. Zounds! what a clatter! She'll pull down all the bells in the house.

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Oak. My observations since I left you have confirm'd my resolution. I see plainly that her good-humour, and her ill-humour, her smiles, her tears, and her fits, are all calculated to play upon me.

Maj. Did not I always tell you so? It's the way with them all: They will be rough, and smooth, and hot, and cold, and all in a breath: Any thing to get the better of us.

Oak. She is in all moods at present, I promise you. I am at once angry and ashamed of her; and yet she is so ridiculous I can't help laughing at her: There has she been in her chamber, fuming and fretting, and dispatching a messenger to me every two minutes; servant after servant——Now she insists on my coming to her—now again she writes a note to entreat—then Toilet is sent to let me know that she is ill—absolutely dying—then, the very next minute, she'll never see my face again—she'll go out of the house directly. [*Bell rings.*] Again! Now the storm rises.

Maj. It will soon drive this way then. Now, brother, prove yourself a man: You have gone too far to retreat.

Oak. Retreat! retreat! No, no! I'll preserve the advantage I have gained, I am determined.

Maj. Ay, ay! keep your ground! fear nothing! up with your noble heart! good discipline makes

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makes good foldiers : Stick close to my advice, and you may stand buff to a tigress.

Oak. Here she is, by Heavens. Now, brother !

Maj. And now, brother ! now, or never !

Enter Mrs. Oakly.

Mrs. Oak. I think, Mr. Oakly, you might have had humanity enough to have come to see how I did. You have taken your leave, I suppose, of all tenderness and affection ! But I'll be calm ; I'll not throw myself into a passion. You want to drive me out of your house ; I see what you aim at, and will be aforehand with you. Let me keep my temper ! I'll send for a chair, and leave the house this instant.

Oak. True, my love ! I knew you would not think of dining in your own chamber alone, when I had company below. You shall sit at the head of the table, as you ought, to be sure, as you say, and make my friends welcome.

Mrs. Oak. Excellent raillery ! Look ye, Mr. Oakly, I see the meaning of all this affected coolness and indifference !

Oak. My dear, consider where you are !

Mrs. Oak. You would be glad, I find, to get me out of your house, and have all your flirts about you.

Oak.

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Oak. Before all this company! Fie!

Mrs. Oak. But I'll disappoint you; for I shall remain in it to support my due authority. As for you, Major Oakly——

Maj. Heyday! what have I done?

Mrs. Oak. I think you might find better employment, than to create divisions between married people! And you, Sir——

Oak. Nay, but, my dear!

Mrs. Oak. Might have more sense, as well as tenderness, than to give ear to such idle stuff.

Oak. Lord, Lord!

Mrs. Oak. You and your wise counsellor there, I suppose, think to carry all your points with me.

Oak. Was ever any thing——

Mrs. Oak. But it won't do, Sir! You shall find that I will have my own way, and that I will govern my own family.

Oak. You had better learn to govern yourself, by half: Your passion makes you ridiculous. Did ever any body see so much fury and violence? Affronting your best friends, breaking my peace, and disconcerting your own temper! And all for what? For nothing. 'Sdeath, madam, at these years you ought to know better!

Mrs. Oak. At these years! very fine! am I to be talk'd to in this manner?

Oak.

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Oak. Talk'd to! why not? You have talk'd to me long enough; almost talk'd me to death; and I have taken it all, in hopes of making you quiet: But all in vain; for the more one bears, the worse you are. Patience, I find, is all thrown away upon you; and henceforward, come what may, I am resolv'd to be master of my own house.

Mrs. Oak. So, so! master indeed! Yes, Sir, and you'll take care to have mistresses enough too, I warrant you.

Oak. Perhaps I may; but they shall be quiet ones, I assure you.

Mrs. Oak. Indeed! And do you think I am such a tame fool as to sit quietly and bear all this? You shall know, Sir, that I will resent this behaviour! You shall find that I have a spirit——

Oak. Of the devil.

Mrs. Oak. Intolerable! You shall find then that I will exert that spirit. I am sure I have need of it. As soon as the house is once cleared again, I'll shut my doors against all company: You sha'n't see a single soul for this month.

Oak. 'Sdeath, madam, but I will. I'll keep open house for a year; I'll send cards to the whole town; MR. Oakly's route! All the world will come; and I'll go among the world too: I'll be mew'd up no longer.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Oak. Provoking insolence ! This is not to be endured. Look'ye, Mr. Oakly——

Oak. And look'ye, Mrs. Oakly, I will have my own way.

Mrs. Oak. Nay then, let me tell you, Sir——

Oak. And let me tell you, madam, I will not be crossed ; I won't be made a fool !

Mrs. Oak. Why, you won't let me speak !

Oak. Because you don't speak as you ought. Madam, madam, you sha'n't look, nor walk, nor talk, nor think, but as I please !

Mrs. Oak. Was there ever such a monster ? I can bear this no longer. [*Bursts into tears.*] Oh, you vile man ! I see through your design. You cruel, barbarous, inhuman——Such usage to your poor wife ! You'll be the death of her.

Oak. She sha'n't be the death of me, I am determined.

Mrs. Oak. That it should ever come to this ! To be contradicted——[*Sobbing*]——insulted——abused——hated——'tis too much——my heart will burst with——oh——oh——

[*Falls into a Fit.*

[*Harriot, Charles, &c. run to her assistance.*

Oak. [*Interposing.*] Let her alone.

Har. Sir, Mrs. Oakly——

Char. For Heaven's sake, Sir ! she will be——

Oak.

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Oak. Let her alone, I say; I won't have her touched; let her alone! If her passions throw her into fits, let the strength of them carry her through them.

Har. Pray, my dear Sir, let us assist her! she may——

Oak. I don't care. You sha'n't touch her——
Let her bear them patiently. She'll learn to behave better another time. Let her alone, I say.

Mrs. Oak. [*Rising.*] Oh, you monster! you villain! you base man! would you let me die for want of help? would you?

Oak. Bless me, madam, your fit is very violent! Take care of yourself.

Mrs. Oak. Despised! ridiculed! But I'll be revenged! You shall see, Sir——

Oak. *Tel-de-ral lol-de-ral lol-de-ral lol.* [*singing.*

Mrs. Oak. What, am I made a jest of? exposed to all the world? If there's law or justice——

Oak. *Tel-de-ral lol-de-ral lol-de-ral lol.* [*singing.*

Mrs. Oak. I shall burst with anger! Have a care, Sir! you may repent this. Scorned and made ridiculous! No power on earth shall hinder my revenge.

[*Going.*

Har. [*Interposing.*] Stay, madam!

Mrs. Oa. Let me go. I cannot bear this place.

Har.

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Har. Let me beseech you, madam.

Oak. What does the girl mean?

Maj. Courage, brother! You have done wonders. } *Apart.*

Oak. I think she'll have no more fits.

Har. Stay, madam! pray stay! but one moment. I have been a painful witness of your uneasiness, and in great part the innocent occasion of it. Give me leave then——

Mrs. Oak. I did not expect, indeed, to have found you here again. But, however——

Har. I see the agitation of your mind, and it makes me miserable. Suffer me to tell you the real truth. I can explain every thing to your satisfaction.

Mrs. Oak. May be so; I cannot argue with you.

Char. Pray, madam, hear her—for my sake—for your own—dear madam!

Mrs. Oak. Well, well; proceed.

Oak. I shall relapse; I cannot bear to see her so uneasy. } *Apart.*

Maj. Hush, hush!

Har. I understand, madam, that your first alarm was occasioned by a letter from my father to your nephew.

Ruf. I was in a bloody passion to be sure, madam! The letter was not over civil, I believe: I did not know

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know but the young rogue had ruined my girl.
But its all over now, and so——

Mrs. Oak. You were here yesterday, Sir?

Ruf. Yes, I came after Harriot. I thought I should find my young Madam with my young Sir, here.

Mrs. Oak. With Charles, did you say, Sir?

Ruf. Ay, with Charles, madam. The young rogue has been fond of her a long time, and she of him, it seems.

Mrs. Oak. I fear I have been to blame. [*Aside.*]

Ruf. I ask pardon, madam, for the disturbance I made in your house.

Har. And the abrupt manner in which I came into it, demands a thousand apologies: But the occasion must be my excuse.

Mrs. Oak. How have I been mistaken! [*Aside.*]
But did not I overhear you and Mr. Oakly——

[*To Harriot.*]

Har. Dear madam, you had but a partial hearing of our conversation. It related entirely to this gentleman.

Char. To put it beyond doubt, madam, Mr. Ruffet and my guardian have consented to our marriage; and we are in hopes that you will not withhold your approbation.

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Mrs. Oak. I have no further doubt; I see you are innocent, and it was cruel to suspect you. You have taken a load of anguish off my mind; and yet your kind interposition comes too late; Mr. Oakly's love for me is entirely destroyed. *[Weeping.]*

Oak. I must go to her!

Maj. Not yet, not yet!

} Apart.

Har. Do not disturb yourself with such apprehensions; I am sure Mr. Oakly loves you most affectionately.

Oak. I can hold no longer. *[Going to her.]* My affection for you, madam, is as warm as ever; nothing can ever extinguish it: My constrained behaviour cut me to the soul; for, within these few hours, it has been all constrained; and it was with the utmost difficulty that I was able to support it.

Mrs. Oak. Oh, Mr. Oakly, how have I exposed myself! what low arts has my jealousy induced me to practise! I see my folly, and fear that you can never forgive me.

Oak. Forgive you! you are too good, my love! forgive you! can you forgive me? This change transports me. Brother! Mr. Ruffet! Charles! Harriot! give me joy! I am the happiest man in the world.

Maj.

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Maj. Joy, much joy to you both ! though, by-the-bye, you are not a little obliged to me for it. Did not I tell you I would cure all the disorders in your family ? I beg pardon, sister, for taking the liberty to prescribe for you : My medicines have been somewhat rough, I believe, but they have had an admirable effect, and so don't be angry with your physician.

Mrs. Oak. I am indeed obliged to you, and I feel——

Oak. Nay, my dear, no more of this. All that's past must be utterly forgotten.

Mrs. Oak. I have not merited this kindness ; but it shall hereafter be my study to deserve it. Away with all idle jealousies ! and, since my suspicions have hitherto been groundless, I am resolved for the future never to suspect at all.

E P I L O G U E,

Spoken by Mrs. CLIVE.

LADIES! I've had a squabble with the poet—
About his characters—and you shall know it.
Young man, said I, restrain your saucy satire!
My part's ridiculous—false—out of nature.
Fine draughts indeed of ladies! sure you hate 'em!
Why, Sir!—My part is *scandalum magnatum*.

“ Lord, ma'am, said he, to copy life my trade is,
And poets ever have made free with ladies!
One Simon—the duce take such names as these!—
A hard Greek name—O—ay—Simonides—
He shew'd,—our freaks, this whim and that desire,
Rose first from earth, sea, air, nay, some from fire;
Or that we owe our persons, minds, and features
To birds, forsooth, and filthy four-legg'd creatures.

The dame, of manners various, temper fickle,
Now all for pleasure, now the conventicle!
Whoprays, then raves, now calm, now all commotion,
Rises, another Venus, from the ocean.

Constant at every sale, the curious fair,
Who longs for Dresden, and old China ware;

Who

Who dotes on pagods, and gives up vile man
 For niddle-noddle figures from Japan;
 Critick in jars and josses, shews her birth
 Drawn, like the brittle ware itself, from earth.

The flaunting she, so stately, rich and vain,
 Who gains her conquests by her length of train;
 While all her vanity is under fail,
 Sweeps, a proud peacock, with a gaudy tail.

Husband and wife, with *sweets!* and *dears!* and
loves!

What are they, but a pair of cooing doves?
 But seiz'd with spleen, fits, humours, and all that,
 Your dove and turtle turn to dog and cat.

The gossip, prude, old maid, coquette, and trapes,
 Are parrots, foxes, magpies, wasps and apes:
 But she, with ev'ry charm of form and mind,
 Oh! she's—sweet soul—the phoenix of her kind."

'This his apology!—"Tis rank abuse—
 A fresh affront, instead of an excuse!
 His own sex rather such description suits:
 Why don't he draw *their* characters—the brutes!
 Ay, let him paint those ugly monsters, *men!*
 Meantime—mend we our lives—he'll mend his pen.

T H E
CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE.

C O M E D Y.

WRITTEN BY

GEORGE COLMAN AND DAVID GARRICK.

*Huc adhibe vultus, et in unâ parte dolus:
Fingat, et ejusdem finis uterque parens!* OVID.

*First acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, on
the 20th of February, 1766.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

HOGARTH's Marriage-a-la-Mode has before furnished materials to the author of a novel, published some years ago, under the title of the Marriage-Act: But as that writer pursued a very different story, and as his work was chiefly designed for a political satire, very little use could be made of it for the service of this Comedy.

Some friends, and some enemies, have endeavoured to allot distinct portions of this play to each of the Authors. Each, however, considers himself as responsible for the whole; and though they have, on other occasions, been separately honoured with the indulgence of the publick, it is with peculiar pleasure that they now make their joint acknowledgements for the very favourable reception of the *Clandestine Marriage*.

P R O L O G U E,

Written by Mr. GARRICK,

And spoken by Mr. HOLLAND.

POETS and painters, who from Nature draw
Their best and richest stores, have made this law:
That each should neighbourly assist his brother,
And steal with decency from one another.
To-night, your matchless Hogarth gives the thought,
Which from his canvas to the stage is brought.
And who so fit to warm the poet's mind,
As he who pictur'd morals and mankind?
But not the same their characters and scenes;
Both labour for one end, by different means;
Each, as it suits him, takes a separate road,
Their one great object, Marriage-a-la-Mode!
Where titles deign with cits to have and hold,
And change rich blood for more substantial gold!
And honour'd trade from interest turns aside,
To hazard happiness for titled pride.

The painter dead, yet still he charms the eye;
While England lives, his fame can never die:

But

P R O L O G U E,

But he, who *struts his hour upon the stage*,
Can scarce extend his fame for half an age;
Nor pen nor pencil can the actor save,
The art, and artist, share one common grave.

Oh, let me drop one tributary tear,
On poor Jack Falstaff's grave, and Juliet's bier!
You to their worth must testimony give;
'Tis in your hearts alone their fame can live.
Still as the scenes of life will shift away,
The strong impressions of their art decay.
Your children cannot feel what you have known;
They'll boast of Quins and Cibbers of their own:
The greatest glory of our happy few,
Is to be felt, and be approv'd by *you*.

DRAMATIS

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD OGLEBY,
SIR JOHN MELVIL,
STERLING,
LOVEWELL,
CANTON,
BRUSH,
SERJEANT FLOWER,
TRAVERSE,
TRUEMAN,

MRS. HEIDELBERG,
MISS STERLING,
FANNY,
BETTY,
CHAMBERMAID,
TRUSTY,

Mr. King.
Mr. Holland.
Mr. Yates.
Mr. Powell.
Mr. Baddeley.
Mr. Palmer.
Mr. Love.
Mr. Lee.
Mr. Fiskin.

Mrs. Clive.
Miss Pope.
Mrs. Palmer.
Mrs. Mington.
Miss Plyn.
Miss Mills.

T H E

CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE.

A C T I

SCENE, a room in Sterling's house.

Miss Fanny and Betty meeting.

Betty running in.

MA'AM! miss Fanny! ma'am!
Fanny. What's the matter, Betty!

Betty. Oh la, ma'am! as sure as I am alive, here is your husband——

Fanny. Hush, my dear Betty! if any body in the house should hear you, I am ruined.

Betty. Mercy on me! it has frightened me to such a degree, that my heart is come up to my mouth. But as I was a saying, ma'am, here's that dear, sweet——

Fanny. Have a care, Betty.

Betty. Lord! I'm bewitched, I think. But, as I was a saying, ma'am, here's Mr. Lovewell just come from London.

Fanny.

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Fanny. Indeed !

Betty. Yes, indeed, and indeed, ma'am, he is. I saw him crossing the court-yard in his boots.

Fanny. I am glad to hear it. But pray now, my dear Betty, be cautious. Don't mention that word again, on any account. You know, we have agreed never to drop any expressions of that sort, for fear of an accident.

Betty. Dear ma'am, you may depend upon me. There is not a more trustier creature on the face of the earth, than I am. Though I say it, I am as secret as the grave ; and if it's never told, till I tell it, it may remain untold till dooms-day for Betty.

Fanny. I know you are faithful, but in our circumstances we cannot be too careful.

Betty. Very true, ma'am ! and yet I vow and protest, there's more plague than pleasure with a secret ; especially if a body mayn't mention it to four or five of one's particular acquaintance.

Fanny. Do but keep this secret a little while longer, and then, I hope, you may mention it to any body. Mr. Lovewell will acquaint the family with the nature of our situation as soon as possible.

Betty. The sooner the better, I believe : For if he does not tell it, there's a little tell-tale, I know of, will come and tell it for him.

Fanny.

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Fanny. Fy, Betty! [blushing.]

Betty. Ah! you may well blush; but you're not so sick, and so pale, and so wan, and so many qualms——

Fanny. Have done! I shall be quite angry with you.

Betty. Angry! bless the dear puppet! I am sure I shall love it as much as-if it was my own. I meant no harm, Heaven knows.

Fanny. Well, say no more of this; it makes me uneasy. All I have to ask of you, is to be faithful and secret, and not to reveal this matter, till we disclose it to the family ourselves.

Betty. Me reveal it! If I say a word, I wish I may be burned. I would not do you any harm for the world; and as for Mr. Lovewell, I am sure I have loved the dear gentleman, ever since he got a tide-waiter's place for my brother. But let me tell you both, you must leave off your soft looks to each other, and your whispers, and your glances, and your always sitting next to one another at dinner, and your long walks together in the evening. For my part, if I had not been in the secret, I should have known you were a pair of lovers at least, if not man and wife, as——

Fanny. See there now! again. Pray be careful.

Betty.

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Betty. Well, well, nobody hears me. Man and wife. I'll say no more. What I tell you is very true, for all that——

Love. [*calling within.*] William!

Betty. Hark! I hear you husband——

Fanny. What!

Betty. I say, here comes Mr. Lovewell. Mind the caution I give you. I'll be whipped now, if you are not the first person he sees or speaks to in the family. However, if you chuse it, it's nothing at all to me; as you sow, you must reap; as you brew, so you must bake. I'll e'en slip down the back-stairs, and leave you together. [*Exit.*]

Fanny alone.

I see, I see I shall never have a moment's ease till our marriage is made publick. New distresses croud in upon me every day. The solicitude of my mind sinks my spirits, preys upon my health, and destroys every comfort of my life. It shall be revealed, let what will be the consequence.

Enter Lovewell.

Love. My love! How's this? in tears? Indeed, this is too much. You promised me to support your spirits, and to wait the determination of our fortune with patience. For my sake, for your own,
be

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be comforted ! why will you study to add to our uneasiness and perplexity ?

Fanny. Oh, Mr. Lovewell ! the indelicacy of a secret marriage grows every day more and more shocking to me. I walk about the house like a guilty wretch : I imagine myself the object of the suspicion of the whole family ; and am under the perpetual terrors of a shameful detection.

Love. Indeed, indeed, you are to blame. The amiable delicacy of your temper, and your quick sensibility, only serve to make you unhappy. To clear up this affair properly to Mr. Sterling, is the continual employment of my thoughts. Every thing now is in a fair train. It begins to grow ripe for a discovery ; and I have no doubt of its concluding to the satisfaction of ourselves, of your father, and the whole family.

Fanny. End how it will, I am resolved it shall end soon, very soon. I would not live another week in this agony of mind, to be mistress of the universe.

Love. Do not be too violent neither. Do not let us disturb the joy of your sister's marriage with the tumult this matter may occasion ! I have brought letters from lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil to Mr. Sterling ; they will be here this evening ; and, I dare say, within this hour.

Fanny. I am sorry for it.

Love. Why so?

Fanny. No matter; only let us disclose our marriage immediately!

Love. As soon as possible.

Fanny. But directly.

Love. In a few days, you may depend on it.

Fanny. To-night; or to-morrow morning.

Love. That, I fear, will be impracticable.

Fanny. Nay, but you must.

Love. Must! why?

Fanny. Indeed, you must. I have the most alarming reasons for it.

Love. Alarming indeed! for they alarm me, even before I am acquainted with them. What are they?

Fanny. I cannot tell you.

Love. Not tell me?

Fanny. Not at present. When all is settled, you shall be acquainted with every thing.

Love. Sorry they are coming! must be discovered! what can this mean! Is it possible you can have any reasons that need be concealed from me?

Fanny. Do not disturb yourself with conjectures; but rest assured, that though you are unable to divine the cause, the consequence of a discovery,
be

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be it what it will, cannot be attended with half the miseries of the present interval.

Love. You put me upon the rack. I would do any thing to make you easy. But you know your father's temper. Money (you will excuse my frankness) is the spring of all his actions, which nothing but the idea of acquiring nobility or magnificence can ever make him forego; and these he thinks his money will purchase. You know too your aunt's, Mrs. Heidelberg's, notions of the splendor of high life, her contempt for every thing that does not relish of what she calls *quality*, and that from the vast fortune in her hands, by her late husband, she absolutely governs Mr. Sterling and the whole family: now, if they should come to the knowledge of this affair too abruptly, they might, perhaps, be incensed beyond all hopes of reconciliation.

Fanny. But if they are made acquainted with it otherwise than by ourselves, it will be ten times worse: and a discovery grows every day more probable. The whole family have long suspected our affection. We are also in the power of a foolish maid-servant; and if we may even depend on her fidelity, we cannot answer for her discretion. Discover it therefore immediately, lest some accident should bring it to light, and involve us in additional disgrace.

Love. Well, well; I meant to discover it soon, but would not do it too precipitately. I have more than once sounded Mr. Sterling about it, and will attempt him more seriously the next opportunity. But my principal hopes are these. My relationship to lord Ogleby, and his having placed me with your father, have been, you know, the first links in the chain of this connection between the two families; in consequence of which, I am at present in high favour with all parties: while they all remain thus well-affected to me, I propose to lay our case before the old lord; and if I can prevail on him to mediate in this affair, I make no doubt but he will be able to appease your father; and, being a lord and a man of quality, I am sure he may bring Mrs. Heidelberg into good-humour at any time. Let me beg you, therefore, to have but a little patience, as, you see, we are upon the very eve of a discovery, that must probably be to our advantage.

Fanny. Manage it your own way. I am persuaded.

Love. But, in the mean time, make yourself easy.

Fanny. As easy as I can, I will. We had better not remain together any longer at present. Think of this business, and let me know how you proceed.

Love. Depend on my care! But pray, be cheerful.

Fanny. I will.

As

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As she is going out, enter Sterling.

Sterl. Hey-day! who have we got here?

Fanny. [*confused.*] Mr. Lovewell, Sir!

Sterl. And where are you going, hussy?

Fanny. To my sister's chamber, Sir! [*Exit.*]

Sterl. Ah, Lovewell! what! always getting my foolish girl yonder into a corner? well, well; let us but once see her elder sister fast married to Sir John Melvil, we'll soon provide a good husband for Fanny, I warrant you.

Love. Would to Heaven, Sir, you would provide her one of my recommendation!

Sterl. Yourself? eh, Lovewell!

Love. With your pleasure, Sir.

Sterl. Mighty well!

Love. And I flatter myself, that such a proposal would not be very disagreeable to Miss Fanny.

Sterl. Better and better!

Love. And if I could but obtain your consent, Sir—

Sterl. What! you marry Fanny! no, no; that will never do, Lovewell! You're a good boy, to be sure, I have a great value for you—but can't think of you for a son-in-law. There's no *stuff* in the case; no money, Lovewell!

Love. My pretensions to fortune, indeed, are

but moderate : But though not equal to splendor, sufficient to keep us above distress. Add to which, that I hope by diligence to increase it ; and have love, honour——

Sterl. But not the *stuff*, Lovewell ! Add one little round o to the sum-total of your fortune, and that will be the finest thing you can say to me. You know I've a regard for you—would do any thing to serve you—any thing on the footing of friendship ; but——

Love. If you think me worthy of your friendship, Sir, be assured, that there is no instance in which I should rate your friendship so highly.

Sterl. Psha ! psha ! that's another thing, you know. Where money or interest is concerned, friendship is quite out of the question.

Love. But where the happiness of a daughter is at stake, you would not scruple, sure, to sacrifice a little to her inclinations.

Sterl. Inclinations ! why, you would not persuade me that the girl is in love with you ; eh, Lovewell ?

Love. I cannot absolutely answer for Miss Fanny, Sir ; but am sure that the chief happiness or misery of my life depends entirely upon her.

Sterl. Why, indeed now, if your kinsman Lord Ogleby

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Ogleby, would come down handsomely for you—but that's impossible—no, no; 'twill never do; I must hear no more of this: Come, Lovewell, promise me that I shall hear no more of this.

Love. [*hesitating.*] I am afraid, Sir, I should not be able to keep my word with you, if I did promise you.

Sterl. Why, you would not offer to marry her without my consent! would you, Lovewell?

Love. Marry her, Sir! [*confused.*]

Sterl. Ay, marry her, Sir! I know very well that a warm speech or two from such a dangerous young spark as you are, would go much further towards persuading a silly girl to do what she has more than a month's mind to do, than twenty grave lectures from fathers or mothers, or uncles or aunts, to prevent her. But you would not, sure, be such a base fellow, such a treacherous young rogue, as to seduce my daughter's affections, and destroy the peace of my family in that manner. I must insist on it, that you give me your word not to marry her without my consent.

Love. Sir—I—I—as to that—I—I—I beg, Sir—Pray, Sir, excuse me on this subject at present.

Sterl. Promise then, that you will carry this matter no further without my approbation.

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Love. You may depend on it, Sir, that it shall go no further.

Sterl. Well, well, that's enough; I'll take care of the rest, I warrant you. Come, come, let's have done with this nonsense! What's doing in town? Any news upon 'Change?

Love. Nothing material.

Sterl. Have you seen the currants, the sops, and Madeira, safe in the warehouses? have you compared the goods with the invoice and bills of lading, and are they all right?

Love. They are, Sir!

Sterl. And how are stocks?

Love. Fell one and a half this morning.

Sterl. Well, some good news from America, and they'll be up again. But how are lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil? When are we to expect them?

Love. Very soon, Sir. I came on purpose to bring you their commands. Here are letters from both of them.

[*Giving letters.*]

Sterl. Let me see, let me see. 'Slife, how his lordship's letter is perfumed! It takes my breath away. [*opening it.*] And French paper too! with a fine border of flowers and flourishes, and a slippery gloss on it that dazzles one's eyes. *My dear Mr.*

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Mr. Sterling. [*reading.*] Mercy on me! His lordship writes a worse hand than a boy at his exercise. But how's this? Eh! *With you to-night,* [*reading.*] *Lawyers to-morrow morning.* To-night! that's sudden indeed. Where's my sister Heidelberg? she should know of this immediately.—Here, John! Harry! Thomas! [*calling the servants.*] Hark ye, Lovewell!

Love. Sir!

Sterl. Mind now, how I'll entertain his lordship and Sir John: We'll shew your fellows at the other end of the town how we live in the city. They shall eat gold, and drink gold, and lie in gold. Here, Cook! Butler! [*calling.*] What signifies your birth and education, and titles? Money, money! that's the stuff that makes the great man in this country?

Love. Very true, Sir.

Sterl. True, Sir? why then, have done with your nonsense of love and matrimony. You're not rich enough to think of a wife yet. A man of business should mind nothing but his business. Where are these fellows? John! Thomas! [*calling.*] Get an estate, and a wife will follow of course. Ah, Lovewell! an English merchant is the most respectable character in the universe. 'Slife, man, a
rich.

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rich English merchant may make himself a match for the daughter of a nabob. Where are all my rascals? Here, William! [*Exit calling.*]

Lovewell alone.

So! As I suspected. Quite averse to the match, and likely to receive the news of it with great displeasure. What's best to be done? Let me see! Suppose I get Sir John Melvil to interest himself in this affair. He may mention it to lord Ogleby with a better grace than I can, and more probably prevail on him to interfere in it. I can open my mind also more freely to Sir John. He told me, when I left him in town, that he had something of consequence to communicate, and that I could be of use to him. I am glad of it; for the confidence he reposes in me, and the service I may do him, will ensure me his good offices. Poor Fanny! it hurts me to see her so uneasy, and her making a mystery of the cause adds to my anxiety. Something must be done upon her account; for, at all events, her solicitude shall be removed.

[*Exit.*]

Scene changes to another chamber.

Enter Miss Sterling and Miss Fanny.

Miss Sterl. Oh, my dear sister, say no more!
This

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This is downright hypocrisy. You shall never convince me that you don't envy me beyond measure. Well, after all, it is extremely natural: It is impossible to be angry with you.

Fanny. Indeed, sister, you have no cause.

Miss Sterl. And you really pretend not to envy me?

Fanny. Not in the least.

Miss Sterl. And you don't in the least wish that you were just in my situation?

Fanny. No, indeed, I don't. Why should I?

Miss Sterl. Why should you? what! on the brink of marriage, fortune, title—But I had forgot; there's that dear sweet creature Mr. Lovewell in the case. You would not break your faith with your true love now for the world, I warrant you.

Fanny. Mr. Lovewell! always Mr. Lovewell! Lord, what signifies Mr. Lovewell, sister?

Miss Sterl. Pretty peevish soul! Oh, my dear, grave, romantic sister! a perfect philosopher in petticoats! Love and a cottage! oh, Fanny! Ah, give me indifference and a coach and six!

Fanny. And why not the coach and six, without the indifference? But, pray, when is this happy marriage of yours to be celebrated? I long to give you joy.

Miss

Miss Sterl. In a day or two; I can't tell exactly. Oh, my dear sister!—I must mortify her a little. [*aside.*] I know you have a pretty taste. Pray, give me your opinion of my jewels. How d'ye like the style of this *esclavage*? [*Showing jewels.*]

Fanny. Extremely handsome indeed, and well fancied.

Miss Sterl. What d'ye think of these bracelets? I shall have a miniature of my father, set round with diamonds, to one, and Sir John's to the other. And this pair of ear-rings, set transparent! Here, the tops, you see, will take off to wear in a morning, or in an undress. How d'ye like them?

[*Shows jewels.*]

Fanny. Very much, I assure you. Bless me, sister, you have a prodigious quantity of jewels; you'll be the very queen of diamonds.

Miss Sterl. Ha! ha! ha! very well, my dear! I shall be as fine as a little queen indeed. I have a bouquet to come home to-morrow, made up of diamonds, and rubies, and emeralds, and topazes, and amethysts; jewels of all colours, green, red, blue, yellow, intermix'd; the prettiest thing you ever saw in your life! The jeweller says, I shall set out with as many diamonds as any body in town, except lady Brilliant, and Polly *What-d'ye-call-it*, lord Squander's kept mistress.

Fanny.

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Fanny. But what are your wedding-cloaths, sister?

Miss Sterl. Oh, white and silver, to be sure, you know. I bought them at Sir Joseph Lutestring's, and sat above an hour in the parlour behind the shop, consulting lady Lutestring about gold and silver stuffs, on purpose to mortify her.

Fanny. Fy, sister! how could you be so abominably provoking?

Miss Sterl. Oh, I have no patience with the pride of your city-knights' ladies. Did you never observe the airs of lady Lutestring, dressed in the richest brocade out of her husband's shop, playing crown-whist at Haberdasher's Hall? while the civil smirking Sir Joseph, with a smug wig trimmed round his broad face as close as a new-cut yew-hedge, and his shoes so black that they shine again, stands all day in his shop, fastened to his counter like a bad shilling?

Fanny. Indeed, indeed, sister, this is too much: If you talk at this rate, you will be absolutely a byeword in the city. You must never venture on the inside of Temple-Bar again.

Miss Sterl. Never do I desire it; never, my dear Fanny, I promise you. Oh, how I long to be transported to the dear regions of Grosvenor-Square!

far,

far, far from the dull districts of Aldersgate, Cheap, Candlewick, and Farringdon Without and Within? My heart goes pit-a-pat at the very idea of being introduced at court: gilt chariot! pye-balled horses! laced liveries! and then the whispers buzzing round the circle, "Who is that young lady? Who is she?" "Lady Melvil, Ma'am!" Lady Melvil! my ears tingle at the sound. And then at dinner, instead of my father perpetually asking, "Any news upon 'Change?" to cry, "Well, Sir John! any thing new from Arthur's?" or to say to some other woman of quality, "Was your ladyship at the duchess of Rubber's last night? Did you call in at lady Thunder's? In the immensity of croud, I swear I did not see you! Scarce a soul at the opera last Saturday! Shall I see you at Carlisle-House next Thursday?" Oh, the dear beau-monde! I was born to move in the sphere of the great world.

Fanny. And so, in the midst of all this happiness, you have no compassion for me; no pity for us poor mortals in common life.

Miss Sterl. [*affectedly.*] You? you're above pity. You would not change conditions with me; you're over head and ears in love, you know. Nay, for that matter, if Mr. Lovewell and you come together,

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ther, as I doubt not you will, you will live very comfortably, I dare say. He will mind his business, you'll employ yourself in the delightful care of your family, and once in a season perhaps you'll sit together in a front-box at a benefit play, as we used to do at our dancing-master's, you know; and perhaps I may meet you in the summer with some other citizens at Tunbridge. For my part, I shall always entertain a proper regard for my relations: You sha'n't want my countenance, I assure you.

Fanny. Oh, you're too kind, sister!

Enter Mrs. Heidelberg.

Mrs. Heidel. [at entering.] Here this evening! I vow and perjest we shall scarce have time to provide for them! Oh, my dear! [to *Miss Sterl.*] I am glad to see you're not quite in a dish-abille. Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil will be here to-night.

Miss Sterl. To-night, ma'am?

Mrs. Heidel. Yes, my dear, to-night. Do, put on a smarter cap, and change those ordinary ruffles! Lord, I have such a deal to do, I shall scarce have time to slip on my Italian lutestring. Where is this dawdle of a housekeeper? [*Enter Mrs. Trufty.*] Oh, here, Trufty! do you know that people of quality are expected here this evening?

Trufty.

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Trusty. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. Well! do you be sure now that every thing is done in the most genteelest manner, and to the honour of the famaly.

Trusty. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. Well, but mind what I say to you.

Trusty. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. His lordship is to lie in the chintz bedchamber; d'ye hear? and Sir John in the blue damask room. His lordship's valet-de-chamb in the opposite.—

Trusty. But Mr. Lovewell is come down, and you know that's his room, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. Well, well, Mr. Lovewell may make shift; or get a bed at the George. But hark you, Trusty!

Trusty. Ma'am!

Mrs. Heidel. Get the great dining-room in order as soon as possible. Unpaper the curtains, take the civers off the couch and the chairs, and put the china figures on the mantle-piece immediately. And set them o' nodding as soon as his lordship comes in, d'ye hear, Trusty?

Trusty. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. Be gone then! fly, this instant! Where's my brother Sterling?

Trusty. Talking to the butler, ma'am.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Heidel. Very well. [*Exit Trudy.*] Miss Fanny! I protest I did not see you before! Lord, child, what's the matter with you?

Fanny. With me? nothing, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. Bless me! why your face is as pale, and black, and yellow—of fifty colours, I protest. And then you have dress'd yourself as loose and as big—I declare there is not such a thing to be seen now, as a young woman with a fine waist; you all make yourselves as round as Mrs. Deputy Barter. Go, child! you know the quality will be here by and by; go, and make yourself a little more fit to be seen. [*Exit Fanny.*] She is gone away in tears; absolutely crying, I vow and protest. This ridiculous love! we must put a stop to it. It makes a perfect natural of the girl.

Miss Sterl. Poor soul! she can't help it. [*Affectedly.*]

Mrs. Heidel. Well, my dear! now I shall have an opportunity of convincing you of the absurdity of what you was telling me concerning Sir John Melvil's behaviour to you.

Miss Sterl. Oh, it gives me no manner of uneasiness. But, indeed, ma'am, I cannot be persuaded but that Sir John is an extremely cold lover. Such distant civility, grave looks, and lukewarm professions of esteem for me and the whole family! I have

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heard

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heard of flames and darts, but Sir John's is a passion of mere ice and snow.

Mrs. Heidel. Oh, fy, my dear! I am perfectly ashamed of you. That's so like the notions of your poor sister! What you complain of as coldness and indifference, is nothing but the extreme gentility of his address, an exact picture of the manners of quality.

Miss Sterl. Oh, he is the very mirror of complaisance! full of formal bows and set speeches! I declare, if there was any violent passion on my side, I should be quite jealous of him.

Mrs. Heidel. I say jealous indeed! Jealous of who, pray?

Miss Sterl. My sister Fanny. She seems a much greater favourite than I am, and he pays her infinitely more attention, I assure you.

Mrs. Heidel. Lord! d'ye think a man of fashion, as he is, can't distinguish between the genteel and the vulgar part of the family? Between you and your sister, for instance; or me and my brother? Be advised by me, child! It is all politeness and good breeding. Nobody knows the quality better than I do.

Miss Sterl. In my mind the old lord, his uncle, has ten times more gallantry about him than Sir John.

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John. He is full of attention to the ladies, and smiles, and grins, and leers, and ogles, and fills every wrinkle in his old wizen face with comical expressions of tenderness. I think he would make an admirable sweetheart.

Exter Sterling.

Sterl. [*at entering.*] No fish? Why the pond was dragged but yesterday morning; there's carp and tench in the boat. Pox on't, if that dog Lovewell had any thought, he would have brought down a turbot, or some of the land-carriage mackerel.

Mrs. Heidel. Lord, brother, I am afraid his lordship and Sir John will not arrive while it is light.

Sterl. I warrant you. But, pray, sister Heidelberg, let the turtle be dressed to-morrow, and some venison; and let the gardener cut some pine-apples, and get out some ice. I'll answer for wine, I warrant you: I'll give them such a glass of Champagne as they never drank in their lives; no, not at a duke's table.

Mrs. Heidel. Pray now, brother, mind how you behave. I am always in a fright about you with people of quality. Take care that you don't fall asleep directly after supper, as you commonly do. Take a good deal of snuff; and that will keep you awake: And don't burst out with your horrible loud horse-laugh. It is monstrous vulgar.

N 2

Sterl.

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Sterl. Never fear, sister! Who have we here?

Mrs. Heidel. It is mounseer Cantoon, the Swiss gentleman, that lives with his lordship, I vow and perdest.

Enter Canton.

Sterl. Ah, mounseer! your servant. I am very glad to see you, mounseer.

Cant. Mosh oblige to Monf. Sterling. Ma'am, I am yours! matemoiselle, I am yours! [*bowing round.*]

Mrs. Heidel. Your humble servant, Mr. Cantoon!

Cant. I kiss your hands, matam!

Sterl. Well, mounseer! and what news of your good family? when are we to see his lordship and Sir John?

Cant. Monf. Sterling, milor Ogelby and Sir Jean Melville will be here in one quarter-hour.

Sterl. I am glad to hear it.

Mrs. Heidel. Oh, I am perdigious glad to hear it. Being so late, I was afeard of some accident. Will you please to have any thing, Mr. Cantoon, after your journey?

Cant. No, I tank you, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. Shall I go and shew you the apartments, Sir?

Cant. Yo do me great honeur, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. Come then! Come, my dear! [*to Miss Sterling.*]

[*Exeunt.*]

Manet

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Mamet Sterling.

Sterl. Pox on't, it's almost dark ! It will be too late to go round the garden this evening. However, I will carry them to take a peep at my fine canal at least ; that I am determined. [*Exit.*]

A C T II.

SCENE, an anti-chamber to Lord Ogleby's bedchamber.
Table with chocolate, and small case for medicines.

Enter Brush, and Chambermaid.

Brush.

YOU shall stay, my dear, I insist upon it.

Cham. Nay, pray, Sir, don't be so positive ; I can't stay indeed.

Brush. You shall take one cup to our better acquaintance.

Cham. I seldom drinks chocolate ; and if I did, one has no satisfaction, with such apprehensions about one : if my lord should wake, or the Swish gentleman should see one, or madam Heidelberg should know of it, I should be frighted to death !

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Befides, I have had my tea already this morning.
I'm fure I hear my lord! [In a fright.]

Brush. No, no, madam; don't flutter yourself.
The moment my lord wakes, he rings his bell,
which I answer fooner or later, as it fuits my convenience.

Cham. But fhould he come upon us without ringing——

Brush. I'll forgive him, if he does. This key
[takes a phial out of the cafe.] locks him up till I
please to let him out.

Cham. Law, Sir! that's 'potecary's ftuff.

Brush. It is fo: But without this he can no more
get out of bed, than he can read without fpectacles.
[fips.] What with qualms, age, rheumatifm, and
a few fufeits in his youth, he muft have a great
deal of brushing, oyling, fcrewing, and winding-
up, to fet him a-going for the day.

Cham. [fips.] That's prodigious, indeed! [fips.]
My lord feems quite in a decay.

Brush. Yes, he's quite a fpectacle, [fips.] a mere
corpfe, till he is reviv'd and refresh'd from our little
magazine here. When the reftorative pills, and
cordial waters warm his ftomach, and get into his
head, vanity frisks in his heart, and then he fetts up
for the lover, the rake, and the fine gentleman.

Cham.

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Cham. [*sips.*] Poor gentleman! But should the Swift gentleman come upon us—— [*frighten'd.*]

Brusb. Why then, the English gentleman would be very angry: No foreigner must break in upon my privacy. [*sips.*] But, I can assure you, monsieur Canton is otherwise employ'd: He is oblig'd to skim the cream of half-a-score news-papers for my lord's breakfast. Ha, ha, ha! Pray, madam, drink your cup peaceably! My lord's chocolate is remarkably good; he won't touch a drop but what comes from Italy.

Cham. [*sipping.*] 'Tis very fine indeed! [*sips.*] and charmingly perfum'd! it smells for all the world like our young ladies' dressing-boxes.

Brusb. You have an excellent taste, madam; and I must beg of you to accept of a few cakes for your own drinking, [*takes 'em out of a drawer in the table.*] and in return, I desire nothing but to taste the perfume of your lips. [*kisses her.*] A small return of favours, madam, will make, I hope, this country, and retirement, agreeable to both. [*he bows, she curtsies.*] Your young ladies are fine girls, faith! [*sips.*] tho', upon my soul, I am quite of my old lord's mind about them; and, were I inclin'd to matrimony, I should take the youngest.

[*sips.*]

Cham.

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Cham. Miss Fanny's the most affablest and the most best-nater'd creter!

Brush. And the eldest a little haughty, or so?

Cham. More haughtier and prouder than Saturn himself. But this I say quite confidential to you, for one would not hurt a young lady's marriage, you know. *[Sips.]*

Brush. By no means; but you can't hurt it with us; we don't consider tempers; we want money, Mrs. Nancy: give us enough of that, we'll abate you a great deal in other particulars. Ha, ha, ha!

Cham. Bless me, here's somebody! *[bell rings.]* Oh, 'tis my lord! Well, your servant, Mr. Brush. I'll clean the cups in the next room.

Brush. Do so; but never mind the bell: I sha'n't go this half-hour. Will you drink tea with me in the afternoon?

Cham. Not for the world, Mr. Brush; I'll be here to set all things to rights, but I must not drink tea, indeed: and so your servant!

[Exit maid, with tea-board. Bell rings again.]

Brush. It is impossible to stupify one's self in the country for a week, without some little flirting with the abigails. This is much the handsomest wench in the house, except the old citizen's youngest daughter, and I have not time enough to lay a plan
for

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for her. *[bell rings.]* And now I'll go to my lord,
for I have nothing else to do. *[going.]*

Enter Canton, with news-papers in his hand.

Cant. Monsieur Brush! maitre Brush! my lor
sirra yet?

Brush. He has just rung his bell; I am going to
him.

Cant. Depechez vous done, *[Exit Brush.]*
[puts on spectacles.] I wish the devil had all dese
papiers; I forget as fast as I read: De Advertise
put out of my head de Gazette, de Gazette de
Chronique, and so dey all go l'un apres l'autre! I
must get some nouvelle for my lor, or he'll be en-
ragèe contre moi. Voyons! *[reads in the papers.]*
Here is nothing but Anti-Sejanus & advertise!

Enter maid, with chocolate things.

Vat you vant, child?

Ch. Maid. Only the chocolate things, Sir.

Cant. O ver well! dat is good girl, and ver prit
100! *[Exit maid.]*

Lord Ogleby within.

L. Ogle. Canton, he, he! *[coughs.]* Canton!

Cant. I come, my lor! Vat shall I do? I have no
news: He will make great tintamarre!

L. Ogle.

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L. Ogle. [*within.*] Canton, I say, Canton!
Where are you?

Enter Lord Ogleby, leaning on Brush.

Cant. Here, my lor! I ask pardon, my lor! I
have not finish de papiers.

L. Ogle. Dem your pardon, and your papiers:
I want you here, Canton.

Cant. Den I run, dat is all. [*shuffles along; lord
Ogleby leans upon Canton too, and comes forward.*]

L. Ogle. You Swifs are the most unaccountable
mixture: You have the language and the imper-
tinence of the French, with the laziness of Dutch-
men.

Cant. 'Tis very true, my lor! I can't help—

L. Ogle. [*cries out.*] O diavolo!

Cant. You are not in pain, I hope, my lor.

L. Ogle. Indeed, but I am, my lor. That vulgar
fellow Sterling, with his city politeness, would
force me down his slope last night to see a clay-
colour'd ditch, which he calls a canal; and what
with the dew, and the east-wind, my hips and
shoulders are absolutely screw'd to my body.

Cant. A littel veritable eau d'arquibufade vil set
all to right again.

[*My lord sits down, Brush gives chocolate.*]

L. Ogle.

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L. Ogle. Where are the palsy-drops, Bruish?

Bruish. Here, my lord! [*Pouring out.*]

L. Ogle. Quelle nouvelle avez vous, Canton?

Cant. A great deal of papier, but no news at all.

L. Ogle. What! nothing at all, you stupid fellow?

Cant. Yes, my lor, I have little advertise here vil give you more plaisir den all de lyes about nothing at all. La voila! [*Putt on his spectacles.*]

L. Ogle. Come, read it, Canton, with good emphasis, and good discretion.

Cant. I vil, my lor. [*Cant. reads.*] Dere is no question, but dat de cosmetique royale vil utterlic take away all heats, pimps, frecks & oder eruptions of de skin, and likewise de wrinque of old age, &c. &c. A great deal more, my lor! Be sure to ask for de cosmetique royale, signed by de docteur own hand. Dere is more raison for dis caution dan good men vil tink.—Eh bein, my lor!

L. Ogle. Eh bien, Canton! Will you purchase any?

Cant. For you, my lor?

L. Ogle. For me, you old puppy! for what?

Cant. My lor?

L. Ogle. Do I want cosmeticks?

Cant. My lor?

L. Ogle.

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L. Ogle. Look in my face! come, be sincere! Does it want the assistance of art?

Cant. [*with his spectacles.*] En verité, non; 'tis very smoothe and brillian. But I tote dat you might take a litt by way of prevention.

L. Ogle. You thought like an old fool, monsieur, as you generally do. The surfeit-water, Brush! [*Brush pours out.*] What do you think, Brush, of this family we are going to be connected with? Eh!

Brush. [*Giving the surfeit water.*] Very well to marry in, my lord; but it would not do to live with.

L. Ogle. You are right, Brush. There is no washing the blackamoor white: Mr. Sterling will never get rid of Black-Fryars; always taste of the borachio: and the poor woman his sifter is so busy and so notable, to make one welcome, that I have not yet got over her first reception; it almost amounted to suffocation! I think the daughters are tolerable. Where's my cephalick snuff?

[*Brush gives him a box.*]

Cant. Dey tink so of you, my lor, for dey look at nothing else, ma foi.

L. Ogle. Did they? Why, I think they did a little. Where's my glafs? [*Brush puts one on the table.*] The youngest is delectable. [*Takes snuff.*]

Cant.

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Cant. O, ouy, my lor; very delect, inteed; she made doux yeux at you, my lor.

L. Ogle. She was particular. The eldest, my nephew's lady, will be a most valuable wife; she has all the vulgar spirits of her father and aunt, happily blended with the termagant qualities of her deceased mother. Some pepper-mint-water, Brush! How happy is it, Cant, for young ladies in general, that people of quality overlook every thing in a marriage contract, but their fortune?

Cant. C'est bien heureux, et commode aussi.

L. Ogle. Brush, give me that pamphlet by my bed-side. [*Brush goes for it.*] Canton, do you wait in the anti-chamber, and let nobody interrupt me till I call you.

Cant. Mush goot may do your lordship!

L. Ogle. [*to Brush, who brings the pamphlet.*] And now, Brush, leave me a little to my studies.

[*Exit Brush.*]

Lord Ogleby alone.

What can I possibly do among these women here, with this confounded rheumatism? It is a most grievous enemy to gallantry and address. [*gets off his chair.*] He! courage, my lor! by heavens, I'm another creature! [*hums and dances a little.*] It will do, faith! Bravo, my lor! these girls have absolutely

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lutely inspired me. If they are for a game of romps—*Me voila pret!* [*sings and dances.*] Oh, that's an ugly twinge! but it's gone. I have rather too much of the lilly this morning in my complexion; a faint tincture of the rose will give a delicate spirit to my eyes for the day. [*Unlocks a drawer at the bottom of the glass, and takes out rouge; while he's painting himself, a knocking at the door.*] Who's there? I won't be disturbed.

Cant. [*without.*] My lor, my lor, here is monsieur Sterling to pay his devoir to you this morn in your chambre.

L. Ogle. [*softly.*] What a fellow! [*aloud.*] I am extremely honour'd by Mr. Sterling: Why don't you see him in, monsieur?—I wish he was at the bottom of his stinking canal.—[*door opens.*] Oh, my dear Mr. Sterling, you do me a great deal of honour.

Enter Sterling and Lovewell.

Sterl. I hope, my lord, that your lordship slept well in the night. I believe there are no better beds in Europe than I have: I spare no pains to get 'em, nor money to buy 'em. His majesty, God blefs him, don't sleep upon a better, out of his palace; and if I said *in* too, I hope no treason, my lord.

L. Ogle.

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L. Ogle. Your beds are like every thing else about you, incomparable ! they not only make one rest well, but give one spirits, Mr. Sterling.

Sterl. What say you then, my lord, to another walk in the garden ? You must see my water by day-light, and my walks, and my slopes, and my clumps, and my bridge, and my flow'ring-trees, and my bed of Dutch tulips. Matters look'd but dim last night, my lord. I feel the dew in my great toe ; but I would put on a cut shoe, that I might be able to walk you about ; I may be laid up to-morrow.

L. Ogle. I pray heaven you may ! *[Aside.*

Sterl. What say you, my lord ?

L. Ogle. I was saying, Sir, that I was in hopes of seeing your young ladies at breakfast. Mr. Sterling, they are, in my mind, the finest tulips in this part of the world. He, he !

Cast. Bravissimo, my lor ! ha, ha, he !

Sterl. They shall meet your lordship in the garden ; we won't lose our walk for them ; I'll take you a little round before breakfast, and a larger before dinner, and in the evening you shall go the Grand Tower, as I call it. Ha, ha, ha !

L. Ogle. Not a foot, I hope, Mr. Sterling : Consider your gout, my good friend ! You'll cer-
tainly

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tainly be laid by the heels for your politeness. He, he, he!

Cant. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis admirable, en verité!

[*Laughing very heartily.*]

Sterl. If my young man [*to Lovewell.*] here, would but laugh at my jokes, which he ought to do, as mounseer does at yours, my lord, we should be all life and mirth.

L. Ogle. What say you, Cant, will you take my kinsman into your tuition? You have certainly the most companionable laugh I ever met with, and never out of tune.

Cant. But when your lordship is out of spirit.

L. Ogle. Well said, Cant! But here comes my nephew, to play his part.

Enter Sir John Melvil.

Well, Sir John, what news from the island of love? have you been sighing and serenading this morning?

Sir John. I am glad to see your lordship in such spirits this morning.

L. Ogle. I'm sorry to see you so dull, Sir. What poor things, Mr. Sterling, these very young fellows are! they make love with faces, as if they were burying the dead: though, indeed, a marriage

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riage sometimes may be properly called a burying of the living. Eh, Mr. Sterling?

Sterl. Not if they have enough to live upon, my lord. Ha, ha, ha!

Cont. Dat is all monsieur Sterling tink of.

Sir John. Prithee, Lovewell, come with me into the garden; I have something of consequence for you, and I must communicate it directly. } *Apart.*

Lovewell. We'll go together.

If your lordship and Mr. Sterling please, we'll prepare the ladies to attend you in the garden.

[Exeunt Sir John and Lovewell.]

Sterl. My girls are always ready; I make them rise soon and to-bed early. Their husbands shall have them with good constitutions, and good fortunes, if they have nothing else, my lord.

L. Ogle. Fine things, Mr. Sterling!

Sterl. Fine things, indeed, my lord! Ah, my lord, had not you run off your speed in your youth, you had not been so crippled in your age, my lord.

L. Ogle. Very pleasant, I protest! He, he, he!

[Half-laughing.]

Sterl. Here's mounfeer now, I suppose, is pretty near your lordship's standing; but having little to eat, and little to spend, in his own country, he'll

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wear three of your lordship out : eating and drinking kills us all.

L. Ogle. Very pleasant, I protest ! What a vulgar dog ! *[Aside.*

Cant. My lor so old as me ! He is thicken to me ; and look like a boy to pauvre me.

Sterl. Ha, ha, ha ! Well said, mounseer ! keep to that, and you'll live in any country of the world. Ha, ha, ha ! But, my lord, I will wait upon you into the garden : we have but a little time to breakfast. I'll go for my hat and cane, fetch a little walk with you, my lord, and then for the hot rolls and butter ! *[Exit Sterling.*

L. Ogle. I shall attend you with pleasure. Hot rolls and butter, in July ! I sweat with the thoughts of it. What a strange beast it is !

Cant. C'est un barbare.

L. Ogle. He is a vulgar dog ; and if there was not so much money in the family, which I can't do without, I would leave him and his hot rolls and butter directly. Come along, monsieur !

[Exeunt lord Ogleby and Cantin.

Scene changes to the garden.

Enter Sir John Melvil and Lovewell.

Love. In my room this morning ? Impossible.

Sir

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Sir John. Before five this morning, I promise you.

Love. On what occasion?

Sir John. I was so anxious to disclose my mind to you, that I could not sleep in my bed: but I found that you could not sleep neither; the bird was flown, and the nest long since cold. Where were you, Lovewell?

Love. Pho! prithee! ridiculous!

Sir John. Come now! which was it? Miss Sterling's maid? a pretty little rogue! or Miss Fanny's Abigail? a sweet soul too! or——

Love. Nay, nay, leave trifling, and tell me your business.

Sir John. Well, but where were you, Lovewell?

Love. Walking—writing—what signifies where I was?

Sir John. Walking! yes, I dare say. It rained as hard as it could pour. Sweet refreshing showers to walk in! No, no, Lovewell. Now would I give twentypounds, to know which of the maids——

Love. But your business! your business, Sir John.

Sir John. Let me a little into the secrets of the family.

Love. Pshaw!

Sir John. Poor Lovewell! he can't bear it, I see.

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She charged you not to kiss and tell; eh, Love-well! However, though you will not honour me with your confidence, I'll venture to trust you with mine. What d'ye think of Miss Sterling?

Love. What do I think of Miss Sterling?

Sir John. Ay; what d'ye think of her?

Love. An odd question! but I think her a smart, lively girl, full of mirth and sprightliness.

Sir John. All mischief and malice, I doubt.

Love. How?

Sir John. But her person! what d'ye think of that?

Love. Pretty and agreeable.

Sir John. A little thing.

Love. What is the meaning of all this?

Sir John. I'll tell you. You must know, Love-well, that notwithstanding all appearances—
[*seeing lord Ogleby, &c.*] We are interrupted. When they are gone, I'll explain.

Enter lord Ogleby, Sterling, Mrs. Heidelberg, Miss Sterling, and Fanny.

L. Ogle. Great improvements, indeed, Mr. Sterling! wonderful improvements! The four seasons in lead, the flying Mercury, and the basin with Neptune in the middle, are all in the very extreme
of

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of fine taste. You have as many rich figures as the man at Hyde-Park-Corner.

Sterl. The chief pleasure of a country-house is to make improvements, you know, my lord. I spare no expence, not I. This is quite another-guests sort of a place than it was when I first took it, my lord. We were surrounded with trees. I cut down above fifty, to make the lawn before the house, and let in the wind and sun; smack smooth, as you see. Then I made a green-house out of the old laundry, and turned the brew-house into a pinery. The high octagon summer-house, you see yonder, is raised on the mast of a ship, given me by an East-India captain, who has turned many a thousand of my money. It commands the whole road: All the coaches and chariots, and chaises, pass and repass under your eye. I'll mount you up there in the afternoon, my lord. 'Tis the pleasantest place in the world to take a pipe and a bottle; and so you shall say, my lord.

L. Ogle. Ay, or a bowl of punch, or a can of flip, Mr. Sterling! for it looks like a cabin in the air. If flying chairs were in use, the captain might make a voyage to the Indies in it still, if he had but a fair wind.

Cant. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. Heidel. My brother's a little comical in his

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ideas, my lord ! but you'll excuse him. I have a little Gothick dairy, fitted up entirely in my own taste. In the evening, I shall hope for the honour of your lordship's company to take a dish of tea there, or a fullabub warm from the cow.

L. Ogle. I have every moment a fresh opportunity of admiring the elegance of *Mrs. Heidelberg*; the very flower of delicacy, and cream of politeness.

Mrs. Heidel. Oh, my lord !
L. Ogle. Oh, madam !

} *leering at each other.*

Sterl. How d'ye like these close walks, my lord ?

L. Ogle. A most excellent serpentine ! It forms a perfect maze, and winds like a true lover's knot.

Sterl. Ay, here's none of your straight lines here ; but all taste—zig-zag—crinkum-crankum—in and out—right and left—to and again—twisting and turning like a worm, my lord !

L. Ogle. Admirably laid out indeed, Mr. Sterling ! one can hardly see an inch beyond one's nose any where in these walks, You are a most excellent economist of your land, and make a little go a great way. It lies together in as small parcels as if it were placed in pots out at your window in Gracechurch-Street.

Cant. Ha, ha, ha, ha !

L. Ogle. What d'ye laugh at, Canton ?

Cant. Ah ! que cette similitude est drole ! So clever what you say, mi lor !

L. Ogle.

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L. Ogle. [to *Fanny*.] You seem mightily engaged, madam. What are those pretty hands so busily employed about?

Fanny. Only making up a nosegay, my lord! Will your lordship do me the honour of accepting it.

[presenting it.

L. Ogle. I'll wear it next my heart, madam!—I see the young creature dotes on me! [apart.

Miss Sterl. Lord, sister! you've loaded his lordship with a bunch of flowers as big as the cook or the nurse carry to town on monday morning for a beaupot. Will your lordship give me leave to present you with this rose, and a sprig of sweet-briar?

L. Ogle. The truest emblems of yourself, madam! all sweetness and poignancy.—A little jealous, poor soul! [apart.

Sterl. Now, my lord, if you please, I'll carry you to see my ruins.

Mrs. Heidel. You'll absolutely fatigue his lordship with overwalking, brother!

L. Ogle. Not at all, madam! We're in the garden of Eden, you know; in the region of perpetual spring, youth, and beauty. [leering at the woman.

Mrs. Heidel. Quite the man of quality, I protest!

[apart.

Cont. Take-a my arm, my lor!

[*lord Ogleby leans on him.*

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Sterl. I'll only shew his lordship my ruins, and the cascade, and the Chinese bridge, and then we'll go in to breakfast.

L. Ogle. Ruins, did you say, Mr. Sterling?

Sterl. Ay, ruins, my lord! and they are reck-on'd very fine ones too. You would think them ready to tumble on your head. It has just cost me a hundred and fifty pounds to put my ruins in thorough repair. This way, if your lordship pleases.

L. Ogle. [*Going, stops.*] What steeple's that we see yonder? the parish-church, I suppose.

Sterl. Ha, ha, ha! that's admirable. It is no church at all, my lord! it is a spire that I have built against a tree, a field or two off, to terminate the prospect. One must always have a church, or an obelisk, or a something, to terminate the prospect, you know. That's a rule in taste, my lord!

L. Ogle. Very ingenious, indeed! For my part, I desire no finer prospect than this I see before me. [*Leering at the women.*] Simple, yet varied; bounded, yet extensive. Get away, Canton! [*pushing away Canton.*] I want no assistance; I'll walk with the ladies.

Sterl. This way, my lord!

L. Ogle. Lead on, Sir! we young folks here will follow you. Madam! Miss Sterling! Miss Fanny! I attend you. [*Exit, after Sterl. gallanting the ladies.*

Cant.

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Cant. [*following.*] He is cock o'de game, ma foy!

[*Exit.*]

Manent Sir John Melvil and Lovewell.

Sir John. At length, thank Heaven, I have an opportunity to unbofom. I know you are faithful, Lovewell, and flatter myself you would rejoice to serve me.

Love. Be assured, you may depend on me.

Sir John. You must know then, notwithstanding all appearances, that this treaty of marriage between Miss Sterling and me will come to nothing.

Love. How!

Sir John. It will be no match, Lovewell.

Love. No match?

Sir John. No.

Love. You amaze me. What should prevent it?

Sir John. I.

Love. You! wherefore?

Sir John. I don't like her.

Love. Very plain indeed! I never supposed that you were extremely devoted to her from inclination, but thought you always considered it as a matter of convenience, rather than affection.

Sir John. Very true. I came into the family without any impressions on my mind; with an unimpassioned

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impassioned indifference, ready to receive one woman as soon as another. I looked upon love, serious, sober love, as a chimæra, and marriage as a thing of course; as you know most people do. But I, who was lately so great an infidel in love, am now one of its sincerest votaries. In short, my defection from Miss Sterling proceeds from the violence of my attachment to another.

Love. Another! So, so! here will be fine work. And pray who is she?

Sir John. Who is she! who can she be, but Fanny, the tender, amiable, engaging Fanny?

Love. Fanny! what Fanny?

Sir John. Fanny Sterling; her sister. Is not she an angel, Lovewell?

Love. Her sister?—Confusion!—You must not think of it, Sir John.

Sir John. Not think of it? I can think of nothing else. Nay, tell me, Lovewell! was it possible for me to be indulged in a perpetual intercourse with two such objects as Fanny and her sister, and not find my heart led by insensible attraction towards her? You seem confounded! why don't you answer me?

Love. Indeed, Sir John, this event gives me infinite concern.

Sir

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Sir John. Why so? Is not she an angel, Lovewell?

Love. I foresee that it must produce the worst consequences. Consider the confusion it must unavoidably create. Let me persuade you to drop these thoughts in time.

Sir John. Never, never, Lovewell!

Love. You have gone too far to recede. A negotiation, so nearly concluded, cannot be broken off with any grace. The lawyers, you know, are hourly expected; the preliminaries almost finally settled between lord Ogleby and Mr. Sterling; and Miss Sterling herself ready to receive you as a husband.

Sir John. Why the banns have been published, and nobody has forbidden them, 'tis true. But you know either of the parties may change their minds, even after they enter the church.

Love. You think too lightly of this matter. To carry your addresses so far, and then to desert her, and for her sister too! It will be such an affront to the family, that they can never put up with it.

Sir John. I don't think so: For, as to my transferring my passion from her to her sister, so much the better! for then, you know, I don't carry my affections out of the family.

Love.

Love. Nay, but prithee be serious, and think better of it.

Sir John. I have thought better of it already, you see. Tell me honestly, Lovewell! can you blame me? is there any comparison between them?

Love. As to that now—why that—is just—just as it may strike different people. There are many admirers of Miss Sterling's vivacity.

Sir John. Vivacity! a medley of Cheapside pertness, and Whitechapel pride. No, no, if I do go so far into the city for a wedding-dinner, it shall be upon turtle at least.

Love. But I see no probability of success; for granting that Mr. Sterling would have consented to it at first, he cannot listen to it now. Why did not you break this affair to the family before?

Sir John. Under such embarrassed circumstances as I have been, can you wonder at my irresolution or perplexity? Nothing but despair, the fear of losing my dear Fanny, could bring me to a declaration even now: And yet, I think, I know Mr. Sterling so well, that, strange as my proposal may appear, if I can make it advantageous to him as a money-transaction, as I am sure I can, he will certainly come into it.

Love. But even suppose he should, which I very
much

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much doubt, I don't think Fanny herself would listen to your addresses.

Sir John. You are deceived a little in that particular.

Love. You'll find I am in the right.

Sir John. I have some little reason to think otherwise.

Love. You have not declared your passion to her already?

Sir John. Yes, I have.

Love. Indeed! And—and—and how did she receive it?

Sir John. I think it is not very easy for me to make my addresses to any woman, without receiving some little encouragement.

Love. Encouragement! did she give you any encouragement?

Sir John. I don't know what you call *encouragement*—but she blushed—and cried—and desired me not to think of it any more: Upon which I press'd her hand—kissed it—swore she was an angel—and I could see it tickled her to the soul.

Love. And did she express no surprize at your declaration?

Sir John. Why, faith, to say the truth, she was a little surprized; and she got away from me too,
before

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before I could thoroughly explain myself. If I should not meet with an opportunity of speaking to her, I must get you to deliver a letter from me.

Love. I! a letter! I had rather have nothing—

Sir John. Nay, you promised me your assistance; and I am sure you cannot scruple to make yourself useful on such an occasion. You may, without suspicion, acquaint her verbally of my determined affection for her, and that I am resolved to ask her father's consent.

Love. As to that, I—your commands, you know—that is, if she—Indeed, Sir John, I think you are in the wrong.

Sir John. Well, well, that's my concern. Ha! there she goes, by Heaven! along that walk yonder, d'ye see? I'll go to her immediately.

Love. You are too precipitate. Consider what you are doing.

Sir John. I would not lose this opportunity for the universe.

Love. Nay, pray don't go! Your violence and eagerness may overcome her spirits. The shock will be too much for her. [*Detaining him.*]

Sir John. Nothing shall prevent me. Ha! now she turns into another walk. Let me go! [*breaks from him.*] I shall lose her. [*Going, turns back.*] Be sure

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sure now to keep out of the way! If you interrupt us, I shall never forgive you. *[Exit hastily.]*

Lowell alone.

'Sdeath! I can't bear this. In love with my wife! acquaint me with his passion for her! make his addresses before my face! I shall break out before my time. This was the meaning of Fanny's uneasiness. She could not encourage him; I am sure she could not. Ha! they are turning into the walk, and coming this way. Shall I leave the place?—Leave him to solicit my wife! I can't submit to it. They come nearer and nearer—If I stay, it will look suspicious—It may betray us, and incense him—They are here—I must go—I am the most unfortunate fellow in the world. *[Exit.]*

Enter Fanny and Sir John.

Fanny. Leave me, Sir John, I beseech you leave me! Nay, why will you persist to follow me with idle solicitations, which are an affront to my character, and an injury to your own honour?

Sir John. I know your delicacy, and tremble to offend it: but let the urgency of the occasion be my excuse! Consider, madam, that the future happiness of my life depends on my present application

tion to you ! consider that this day must determine my fate ; and these are perhaps the only moments left me to incline you to warrant my passion, and to entreat you not to oppose the proposals I mean to open to your father.

Fanny. For shame, for shame, Sir John ! Think of your previous engagements ! Think of your own situation, and think of mine ! What have you discovered in my conduct that might encourage you to so bold a declaration ? I am shocked that you should venture to say so much, and blush that I should even dare to give it a hearing. Let me be gone !

Sir John. Nay, stay, madam ! but one moment ! Your sensibility is too great. Engagements ! what engagements have even been pretended on either side than those of family-convenience ? I went on in the trammels of matrimonial negotiation, with a blind submission to your father and lord Ogleby ; but my heart soon claimed a right to be consulted. It has devoted itself to you, and obliges me to plead earnestly for the same tender interest in yours.

Fanny. Have a care, Sir John ! do not mistake a depraved will for a virtuous inclination. By these common pretences of the heart, half of our sex are made fools, and a greater part of yours despise them for it.

Sir

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Sir John. Affection, you will allow, is involuntary. We cannot always direct it to the object on which it should fix; but, when it is once inviolably attached, inviolably as mine is to you, it often creates reciprocal affection. When I last urged you on this subject, you heard me with more temper, and I hoped with some compassion.

Fanny. You deceived yourself. If I forbore to exert a proper spirit, nay, if I did not even express the quickest resentment of your behaviour, it was only in consideration of that respect I wish to pay you, in honour to my sister: And be assured, Sir, woman as I am, that my vanity could reap no pleasure from a triumph, that must result from the blackest treachery to her. [Going.

Sir John. One word, and I have done. [Stopping her.] Your impatience and anxiety, and the urgency of the occasion, oblige me to be brief and explicit with you. I appeal therefore from your delicacy to your justice. Your sister, I verily believe, neither entertains any real affection for me, or tenderness for you. Your father, I am inclined to think, is not much concerned by means of which of his daughters the families are united. Now as they cannot, shall not be connected, otherwise than by my union with you, why will you, from a false

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delicacy, oppose a measure so conducive to my happiness, and, I hope, your own? I love you, most passionately and sincerely love you—and hope to propose terms agreeable to Mr. Sterling. If then you don't absolutely loath, abhor, and scorn me—if there is no other happier man——

Fanny. Hear me, Sir; hear my final determination—Were my father and sister as insensible as you are pleased to represent them; were my heart for ever to remain disengaged to any other; I could not listen to your proposals. What! you on the very eve of a marriage with my sister; I living under the same roof with her, bound not only by the laws of friendship and hospitality, but even the ties of blood, to contribute to her happiness, and not to conspire against her peace—the peace of a whole family—and that my own too! Away! away, Sir John!—At such a time, and in such circumstances, your addresses only inspire me with horror.—Nay, you must detain me no longer.—I will go.

Sir John. Do not leave me in absolute despair! Give me a glimpse of hope! [*falling on his knees.*]

Fanny. I cannot. Pray, Sir John! [*struggling to go.*]

Sir John. Shall this hand be given to another? [*kissing her hand.*] No—I cannot endure it.—My whole

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whole soul is yours, and the whole happiness of my life is in your power.

Enter Miss Sterling.

Fanny. Ha! my sister is here. Rise for shame, Sir John!

Sir John. Miss Sterling! *[rising.*

Miss Sterl. I beg pardon, Sir! You'll excuse me, madam! I have broke in upon you a little unopportunity, I believe—but I did not mean to interrupt you—I only came, Sir, to let you know that breakfast waits, if you have finished your morning's devotions.

Sir John. I am very sensible, Miss Sterling, that this may appear particular, but——

Miss Sterl. Oh, dear, Sir John, don't put yourself to the trouble of an apology. The thing explains itself.

Sir John. It will soon, madam! In the mean time, I can only assure you of my profound respect and esteem for you, and make no doubt of convincing Mr. Sterling of the honour and integrity of my intentions. And—and—your humble servant, madam! *[Exit in confusion.*

Remain Fanny and Miss Sterling.

Miss Sterl. Respect? Insolence! Esteem? Very

fine truly ! And you, madam ! my sweet, delicate, innocent, sentimental sister ! will you convince my papa too of the integrity of your intentions ?

Fanny. Do not upbraid me, my dear sister ! Indeed, I don't deserve it. Believe me, you can't be more offended at his behaviour than I am, and I am sure it cannot make you half so miserable.

Miss Sterl. Make me miserable ! you are mightily deceived, madam ! it gives me no sort of uneasiness, I assure you. A base fellow ! As for you, miss, the pretended softness of your disposition, your artful good-nature, never imposed upon me. I always knew you to be sly, and envious, and deceitful.

Fanny. Indeed you wrong me.

Miss Sterl. Oh, you are all goodness, to be sure ! Did not I find him on his knees before you ? Did not I see him kiss your sweet hand ? Did not I hear his protestations ? Was not I witness of your dissembled modesty ? No, no, my dear ! don't imagine that you can make a fool of your elder sister so easily.

Fanny. Sir John, I own, is to blame ; but I am above the thoughts of doing you the least injury.

Miss Sterl. We shall try that, madam ! I hope, miss, you'll be able to give a better account to my
papa

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papa and my aunt—for they shall both know of this matter, I promise you. *[Exit.*

Fanny alone.

How unhappy I am! my distresses multiply upon me. Mr. Lovewell must now become acquainted with Sir John's behaviour to me, and in a manner that may add to his uneasiness. My father, instead of being disposed by fortunate circumstances to forgive any transgression, will be previously incensed against me. My sister and my aunt will become irreconcilably my enemies, and rejoice in my disgrace. Yet, at all events, I am determined on a discovery. I dread it, and am resolved to hasten it. It is surrounded with more horrors every instant, as it appears every instant more necessary. *[Exit.*

A C T III.

A Hall.

Enter a servant leading in Serjeant Flower, and Counsellors Traverse and Trueman, all booted.

Servant.

THIS way, if you please, gentlemen! my master is at breakfast with the family at present; but I'll let him know, and he will wait on you immediately.

Flower. Mighty well, young man, mighty well.

Serv. Please to favour me with your names.

Flower. Let Mr. Sterling know, that Mr. Serjeant Flower, and two other gentlemen of the bar, are come to wait on him according to his appointment.

Serv. I will, Sir.

[going.]

Flower. And harkee, young man! *[servant returns.]* Desire my servant—Mr. Serjeant Flower's servant—to bring in my green and gold saddle-cloth and pistols, and lay them down here in the hall with my portmanteau.

Serv. I will, Sir.

[Exit.]

Manent

Manent Lawyers.

Flower. Well, gentlemen! the settling these marriage articles falls conveniently enough, almost just on the eve of the circuits.—Let me see, the Home, the Midland, and Western—ay, we can all cross the country well enough to our several destinations.—Traverse, when do you begin at Hertford?

Traverse. The day after to-morrow.

Flower. That is commission-day with us at Warwick too.—But my clerk has retainers for every cause in the paper, so it will be time enough if I am there the next morning.—Besides, I have about half a dozen cases that have lain by me ever since the spring assizes, and I must tack opinions to them before I see my country clients again—so I will take the evening before me—and then, *currente calamo*, as I say—eh, Traverse!

Traverse. True, Mr. Serjeant—and the easiest thing in the world too—for those country attorneys are such ignorant dogs, that in case of the devise of an estate to A. and his heirs for ever, they'll make a query, whether he takes in fee or in tail.

Flower. Do you expect to have much to do on the Home circuit these assizes?

Traverse. Not much *nisi prius* business, but a

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good deal on the crown side, I believe. The goals are brimfull—and some of the felons in good circumstances, and likely to be tolerable clients.—Let me see! I am engaged for three highway robberies, two murders, one forgery, and half a dozen larcenies, at Kingston.

Flower. A pretty decent gaol-delivery!—Do you expect to bring off Darkin, for the robbery on Putney-Common? can you make out your *alibi*?

Traverse. Oh, no! the crown witnesses are sure to prove our identity. We shall certainly be hanged; but that don't signify. But, Mr. Serjeant, have you much to do? any remarkable cause on the Midland this circuit?

Flower. Nothing very remarkable—except two rapes, and Rider and Western at Nottingham, for *crim. con.*—but, on the whole, I believe a good deal of business.—Our associate tells me, there are above thirty *venires* for Warwick.

Traverse. Pray, Mr. Serjeant, are you concerned in Jones and Thomas, at Lincoln?

Flower. I am—for the plaintiff.

Traverse. And what do you think on't?

Flower. A nonsuit.

Traverse. I thought so.

Flower. Oh, no manner of doubt on't—*luc clarius—*

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Clarins—we have no right in us—we have but one chance.

Traverse. What's that?

Flower. Why, my lord-chief does not go the circuit this time, and my brother Puzzle being in the commission, the cause will come on before him.

Trueman. Ay, that may do, indeed, if you can but throw dust in the eyes of the defendant's counsel.

Flower. True.—Mr. Trueman, I think you are concerned for Lord Ogleby in this affair?

[*to Trueman*.

Trueman. I am, Sir—I have the honour to be related to his lordship, and hold some courts for him in Somersetshire—go the Western circuit—and attend the sessions at Exeter, merely because his lordship's interest and property lie in that part of the kingdom.

Flower. Ha!—And pray, Mr. Trueman, how long have you been called to the bar?

Trueman. About nine years and three quarters.

Flower. Ha!—I don't know that I ever had the pleasure of seeing you before. I wish you success, young gentleman!

Enter Sterling.

Sterl. Oh, Mr. Serjeant Flower, I am glad to see you.

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you. Your servant, Mr. Serjeant ! Gentlemen, your servant !—Well, are all matters concluded ? Has that snail-paced conveyancer, old Ferret of Gray's Inn, settled the articles at last ? Do you approve of what he has done ? Will his tackle hold ? tight and strong ?—eh, master Serjeant ?

Flower. My friend Ferret's slow and sure, Sir. But then, *serius aut citius*, as we say—sooner or later, Mr. Sterling, he is sure to put his business out of hand as he should do.—My clerk has brought the writings, and all other instruments along with him, and the settlement is, I believe, as good a settlement, as any settlement on the face of the earth !

Sterl. But that damn'd mortgage of sixty thousand pounds. There don't appear to be any other incumbrances, I hope ?

Traverse. I can answer for that, Sir—and that will be cleared off immediately on the payment of the first part of Miss Sterling's portion. You agree, on your part, to come down with eighty thousand pound.

Sterl. Down on the nail.—Ay, ay, my money is ready to-morrow, if he pleases—he shall have it in India-bonds, or notes, or how he chuses.—Your lords, and your dukes, and your people at the court-end of the town, stick at payments sometimes
—debts

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—debts unpaid, no credit lost with them—but no fear of us substantial fellows—eh, Mr. Serjeant?

Flower. Sir John having last term, according to agreement, levied a fine, and suffered a recovery, has thereby cut off the entail of the Ogleby estate for the better effecting the purposes of the present intended marriage; on which above-mentioned Ogleby estate, a jointure of two thousand pound *per ann.* is secured to your eldest daughter, now Elizabeth Sterling, spinster, and the whole estate, after the death of the aforefaid earl, descends to the heirs male of Sir John Melvil, on the body of the aforefaid Elizabeth Sterling lawfully to be begotten.

Traverse. Very true—and Sir John is to be put in immediate possession of as much of his lordship's Somersetshire estate, as lies in the manors of Hogmore and Cranford, amounting to between two and three thousand *per ann.* and, at the death of Mr. Sterling, a further sum of seventy thousand—

Enter Sir John Melvil.

Sterl. Ah, Sir John! Here we are—hard at it—paving the road to matrimony—First the lawyers, then comes the doctor! Let us but dispatch the long-robe, we shall soon set pudding-sleeves to work, I warrant you.

Sir

Sir John. I am sorry to interrupt you, Sir—but I hope that both you and these gentlemen will excuse me. Having something very particular for your private ear, I took the liberty of following you, and beg you will oblige me with an audience immediately.

Sterl. Ay, with all my heart!—Gentlemen, Mr. Serjeant, you'll excuse it—business must be done, you know—the writings will keep cold till to-morrow morning.

Flower. I must be at Warwick, Mr. Sterling, the day after.

Sterl. Nay, nay, I shan't part with you to-night, gentlemen, I promise you.—My house is very full, but I have beds for you all, beds for your servants, and stabling for all your horses.—Will you take a turn in the garden, and view some of my improvements before dinner? Or will you amuse yourselves on the green with a game of bowls and a cool tankard?—My servants shall attend you—Do you chuse any other refreshment? Call for what you please—do as you please—make yourselves quite at home, I beg of you.—Here—Thomas! Harry! William! wait on these gentlemen!—*[follows the lawyers out, bawling and talking, and then returns to Sir John.]* And now, Sir, I am entirely at your service.

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service. What are your commands with me, Sir John?

Sir John. After having carried the negotiation between our families to so great a length, after having assented so readily to all your proposals, as well as received so many instances of your cheerful compliance with the demands made on our part, I am extremely concerned, Mr. Sterling, to be the involuntary cause of any uneasiness.

Sterl. Uneasiness! what uneasiness? Where business is transacted as it ought to be, and the parties understand one another, there can be no uneasiness. You agree, on such and such conditions, to receive my daughter for a wife; on the same conditions, I agree to receive you as a son-in-law; and as to all the rest, it follows of course, you know, as regularly as the payment of a bill after acceptance.

Sir John. Pardon me, Sir; more uneasiness has arisen than you are aware of. I am myself, at this instant, in a state of inexpressible embarrassment; Miss Sterling, I know, is extremely disconcerted too; and unless you will oblige me with the assistance of your friendship, I foresee the speedy progress of discontent and animosity through the whole family.

Sterl.

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Sterl. What the deuce is all this? I don't understand a single syllable.

Sir John. In one word then—it will be absolutely impossible for me to fulfil my engagements in regard to Miss Sterling.

Sterl. How, Sir John! Do you mean to put an affront upon my family? What! refuse to——

Sir John. Be assured, Sir, that I neither mean to affront, nor forsake your family. My only fear is, that you should desert me; for the whole happiness of my life depends on my being connected with your family, by the nearest and tenderest ties in the world.

Sterl. Why, did not you tell me, but a moment ago, that it was absolutely impossible for you to marry my daughter?

Sir John. True. But you have another daughter, Sir——

Sterl. Well!

Sir John. Who has obtained the most absolute dominion over my heart. I have already declared my passion to her; nay, Miss Sterling herself is also apprized of it, and if you will but give a sanction to my present addresses, the uncommon merit of Miss Sterling will no doubt recommend her to a person of equal, if not superior rank to myself,

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myself, and our families may still be allied by my union with Miss Fanny.

Sterl. Mighty fine, truly ! Why, what the plague do you make of us, Sir John ? Do you come to market for my daughter, like servants at a statute-fair ? Do you think that I will suffer you, or any man in the world, to come into my house, like the grand signior, and throw the handkerchief first to one, and then to t'other, just as he pleases ? Do you think I drive a kind of African slave-trade with them ? and——

Sir John. A moment's patience, Sir ! Nothing but the excess of my passion for Miss Fanny should have induced me to take any step, that had the least appearance of any disrespect to any part of your family ; and even now I am desirous to atone for my transgression, by making the most adequate compensation that lies in my power.

Sterl. Compensation ! what compensation can you possibly make in such a case as this, Sir John ?

Sir John. Come, come, Mr. Sterling ; I know you to be a man of sense, a man of business, a man of the world. I'll deal frankly with you ; and you shall see that I don't desire a change of measures for my own gratification, without endeavouring to make it advantageous to you.

Sterl.

Sterl. What advantage can your inconstancy be to me, Sir John?

Sir John. I'll tell you, Sir.—You know that by the articles at present subsisting between us, on the day of my marriage with Miss Sterling, you agree to pay down the gross sum of eighty thousand pounds.

Sterl. Well!

Sir John. Now, if you will but consent to my waving that marriage——

Sterl. I agree to your waving that marriage? Impossible, Sir John.

Sir John. I hope not, Sir; as, on my part, I will agree to wave my right to thirty thousand pounds of the fortune I was to receive with her.

Sterl. Thirty thousand, d'ye say?

Sir John. Yes, Sir; and accept of Miss Fanny with fifty thousand, instead of fourscore.

Sterl. Fifty thousand! [pausing.]

Sir John. Instead of fourscore.

Sterl. Why—why—there may be something in that. Let me see! Fanny with fifty thousand, instead of Betsey with fourscore! But how can this be, Sir John? For you know I am to pay this money into the hands of my lord Ogleby; who, I believe—between you and me, Sir John—is not
over-

overstocked with ready money at present; and three-score thousand of it, you know, is to go to pay off the present incumbrances on the estate, Sir John.

Sir John. That objection is easily obviated.—Ten of the twenty thousand, which would remain as a surplus of the four-score, after paying off the mortgage, was intended by his lordship for my use, that we might set off with some little *éclat* on our marriage; and the other ten for his own.—Ten thousand pounds, therefore, I shall be able to pay you immediately; and for the remaining twenty thousand, you shall have a mortgage on that part of the estate which is to be made over to me, with whatever security you shall require for the regular payment of the interest, till the principal is duly discharged.

Sterl. Why, to do you justice, Sir John, there is something fair and open in your proposal; and since I find you do not mean to put an affront upon the family——

Sir John. Nothing was ever farther from my thoughts, Mr. Sterling.—And after all, the whole affair is nothing extraordinary—such things happen every day—and as the world has only heard generally of a treaty between the families, when

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this marriage takes place, nobody will be the wiser, if we have but discretion enough to keep our own counsel.

Sterl. True, true; and since you only transfer your addresses from one girl to the other, it is no more than transferring so much stock, you know.

Sir John. The very thing.

Sterl. Odso, I had quite forgot! We are reckoning without our host here: There is another difficulty——

Sir John. You alarm me! What can that be?

Sterl. I can't stir a step in this business, without consulting my sister Heidelberg. The family has very great expectations from her, and we must not give her any offence.

Sir John. But if you come into this measure, surely, she will be so kind as to consent——

Sterl. I don't know that. Betsey is her darling, and I can't tell how far she may resent any slight that seems to be offered to her favourite niece. However, I'll do the best I can for you: You shall go and break the matter to her first; and, by that time that I may suppose that your rhetoric has prevailed on her to listen to reason, I will step in to reinforce your arguments.

Sir John. I'll fly to her immediately! You promise me your assistance?

Sterl.

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Sterl. I do.

Sir John. Ten thousand thanks for it! And now
success attend me! [Going.

Sterl. Harkee, Sir John!

Sir John returns.

Sterl. Not a word of the thirty thousand to my
sister, Sir John.

Sir John. Oh, I am dumb, I am dumb, Sir. [Going.

Sterl. You remember it is thirty thousand.

Sir John. To be sure I do.

Sterl. But, Sir John! one thing more. [*Sir John
returns.*] My lord must know nothing of this stroke
of friendship between us.

Sir John. Not for the world. Let me alone!
let me alone! [Offering to go.

Sterl. [*holding him.*] And, when every thing is
agreed, we must give each other a bond to be held
fast to the bargain.

Sir John. To be sure. A bond, by all means;
a bond, or whatever you please! [Exit hastily.

Sterling alone.

I should have thought of more conditions; he's
in a humour to give me every thing Why, what
mere children are your fellows of quality; that cry

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for a play-thing one minute, and throw it by the next! as changeable as the weather, and as uncertain as the stocks. Special fellows to drive a bargain! and yet they are to take care of the interest of the nation, truly! Here does this whirligig man of fashion offer to give up thirty thousand pounds in hard money, with as much indifference as if it was a China orange. By this mortgage, I shall have a hold on his *terra firma*; and if he wants more money, as he certainly will, let him have children by my daughter or no, I shall have his whole estate in a net, for the benefit of my family. Well; thus it is, that the children of citizens who have acquired fortunes, prove persons of fashion; and thus it is, that persons of fashion, who have ruined their fortunes, reduce the next generation to cits! [Exit.

Scene changes to another apartment.

Enter Mrs. Heidelberg and Miss Sterling.

Miss Sterl. This is your gentle-looking, soft-speaking, sweet-smiling, affable Miss Fanny for you!

Mrs. Heidel. My Miss Fanny! I disclaim her. With all her arts, she never could insinuat herself into my good graces—And yet she has a way with her, that deceives man, woman, and child, except you and me, niece.

Miss

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Miss Sterl. O, ay; she wants nothing but a crook in her hand, and a lamb under her arm, to be a perfect picture of innocence and simplicity.

Mrs. Heidel. Just as I was drawn at Amsterdam, when I went over to visit my husband's relations!

Miss Sterl. And then she's so mighty good to servants—*pray, John, do this—pray, Tim, do that—thank you, Jenny*—and then so humble to her relations—to be sure, *papa!*—*as my aunt pleases—my sister knows best*—But, with all her demureness and humility, she has no objection to be lady Melvil, it seems, nor to any wickedness that can make her so.

Mrs. Heidel. She lady Melvil? Compose yourself, niece. I'll ladyship her indeed! a little creppin, cantin—She sha'n't be the better for a farden of my money. But, tell me, child, how does this intriguing with Sir John correspond with her partiality to Lovewell? I don't see a concatenation here.

Miss Sterl. There I was deceived, madam. I took all their whisperings and stealing into corners to be the mere attraction of vulgar minds; but, behold! their private meetings were not to contrive their own insipid happiness, but to conspire against mine. But I know whence proceeds

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Mr. Lovewell's resentment to me: I could not stoop to be familiar with my father's clerk, and so I have lost his interest.

Mrs. Heidel. My spurrit to a T! My dear child! [*kissing her.*] Mr. Heidelberg lost his election for member of parliament, because I would not demean myself to be slobbered about by drunken shoemakers, beastly cheesemongers, and greasy butchers and tallow-chandlers. However, niece, I can't help diffurring a little in opinion from you in this matter. My experunce and sagucity makes me still suspect, that there is something more between her and that Lovewell, notwithstanding this affair of Sir John. I had my eye upon them the whole time of breakfast. Sir John, I observed, looked a little confounded, indeed, though I knew nothing of what had passed in the garden. You seemed to sit upon thorns too: But Fanny and Mr. Lovewell made quite another-guefs sort of a figur; and were as perfect a pictur of two distress'd lovers, as if it had been drawn by Raphael Angelo. As to Sir John and Fanny, I want a matter of fact.

Miss Sterl. Matter of fact, madam? Did not I come unexpectedly upon them? was not Sir John kneeling at her feet, and kissing her hands? did not

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not he look all love, and the all confusion? Is not that matter of fact? And did not Sir John, the moment that papa was called out of the room to the lawyermen, get up from breakfast, and follow him immediately? and, I warrant you, that by this time he has made propofals to him to marry my fister. Oh, that some other person, an earl, or a duke, would make his addrefses to me, that I might be revenged on this monster!

Mrs. Heidel. Be cool, child! you *shall* be lady Melvil, in spite of all their caballins, if it costs me ten thousand pounds to turn the scale. Sir John may apply to my brother, indeed; but I'll make them all know who governs in this fammaly.

Miss Sterl. As I live, madam, yonder comes Sir John. A base man! I can't endure the sight of him. I'll leave the room this instant. [*disordered.*]

Mrs. Heidel. Poor thing! Well, retire to your own chamber, child; I'll give it him, I warrant you; and by and by I'll come and let you know all that has pass'd between us.

Miss Sterl. Pray do, madam!—[*looking back.*]—
A vile wretch! [*Exit in a rage.*]

Enter Sir John Melvil.

Sir John. Your most obedient humble servant, madam!

[*bowing very respectfully.*]

Q 4

Mrs.

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Mrs. Heidel. Your servant, Sir John!

[dropping a half-curtsey, and pouting.]

Sir John. Miss Sterling's manner of quitting the room on my approach, and the visible coolness of your behaviour to me, madam, convince me that she has acquainted you with what pass'd this morning.

Mrs. Heidel. I am very sorry, Sir John, to be made acquainted with any thing that should induce me to change the opinion, which I could always wish to entertain of a person of quality. *[pouting.]*

Sir John. It has always been my ambition to merit the best opinion from Mrs. Heidelberg; and when she comes to weigh all circumstances, I flatter myself——

Mrs. Heidel. You *do* flatter yourself, if you imagine that I can approve of your behaviour to my niece, Sir John. And give me leave to tell you, Sir John, that you have been drawn into an action much beneath you, Sir John; and that I look upon every injury offered to Miss Betty Sterling, as an affront to myself, Sir John. *[warmly.]*

Sir John. I would not offend you for the world, madam! But when I am influenced by a partiality for another, however ill-founded, I hope your discernment and good sense will think it rather a
point

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point of honour to renounce engagements, which I could not fulfil so strictly as I ought; and that you will excuse the change in my inclinations, since the new object, as well as the first, has the honour of being your niece, madam.

Mrs. Heidel. I disclaim her as a niece, Sir John; Miss Sterling disclaims her as a sister; and the whole family must disclaim her, for her monstrous baseness and treachery.

Sir John. Indeed she has been guilty of none, madam: Her hand and heart are, I am sure, entirely at the disposal of yourself, and Mr. Sterling.

Enter Sterling behind.

And, if you should not oppose my inclinations, I am sure of Mr. Sterling's consent, madam.

Mrs. Heidel. Indeed!

Sir John. Quite certain, madam.

Sterl. [behind.] So! they seem to be coming to terms already. I may venture to make my appearance.

Mrs. Heidel. To marry Fanny?

[Sterling advances by degrees.]

Sir John. Yes, madam.

Mrs. Heidel. My brother has given his consent, you say?

Sir

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Sir John. In the most ample manner, with no other restriction than the failure of your concurrence, madam. [*sees Sterling.*] Oh, here's Mr. Sterling, who will confirm what I have told you.

Mrs. Heidel. What? have you consented to give up your own daughter in this manner, brother?

Sterl. Give her up! No, not give her up, sister; only in case that you—Zounds, I am afraid you have said too much, Sir John! [*apart to Sir John.*]

Mrs. Heidel. Yes, yes; I see now that it is true enough what my niece told me. You are all plottin and caballin against her. Pray, does lord Ogleby know of this affair?

Sir John. I have not yet made him acquainted with it, madam.

Mrs. Heidel. No, I warrant you; I thought so. And so his lordship and myself truly, are not to be consulted 'till the last.

Sterl. What! did not you consult my lord? Oh, fy, for shame, Sir John!

Sir John. Nay, but, Mr. Sterling—

Mrs. Heidel. We, who are the persons of most consequence and experunce in the two fammalics, are to know nothing of the matter, 'till the whole is as good as concluded upon. But his lordship, I am sure, will have more generosaty than to countenance

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tenance such a perceeding: And I could not have expected such behaviour from a person of your quallaty, Sir John! And as for you, brother——

Sterl. Nay, nay, but hear me, sister!

Mrs. Heidel. I am perfectly ashamed of you! Have you no spurrity? no more concern for the honour of our fammaly than to consent——

Sterl. Consent? I consent? As I hope for mercy, I never gave my consent. Did I consent, Sir John?

Sir John. Not absolutely, without Mrs. Heidelberg's concurrence. But, in case of her approbation——

Sterl. Ay, I grant you, if my sister approved: But that's quite another thing, you know.

[to *Mrs. Heidelberg.*

Mrs. Heidel. Your sister approve, indeed! I thought you knew her better, brother Sterling! What! approve of having your eldest daughter returned upon your hands, and exchanged for the younger? I am surprized how you could listen to such a scandalus propofal.

Sterl. I tell you, I never did listen to it. Did not I say that I would be governed entirely by my sister, Sir John? and, unless she agreed to your marrying Fanny——

Mrs.

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Mrs. Heidel. I agree to his marrying Fanny? Abominable! the man is absolutely out of his senses! Can't that wise head of yours foresee the consequence of all this, brother Sterling? Will Sir John take Fanny without a fortune? No! After you have settled the largest part of your property on your youngest daughter, can there be an equal portion left for the eldest? No! Does not this overturn the whole system of the family? Yes, yes, yes! You know I was always for my niece Betsey's marrying a person of the very first quality; that was my maxim; and, therefore, much the largest settlement was of course to be made upon her. As for Fanny, if she could, with a fortune of twenty or thirty thousand pounds, get a knight, or a member of parliament, or a rich common-council-man, for a husband, I thought it might do very well.

Sir John. But if a better match should offer itself, why should not it be accepted, madam?

Mrs. Heidel. What, at the expence of her elder sister? Oh fy, Sir John! How could you bear to hear of such an indignity, brother Sterling?

Sterl. I! Nay, I sha'n't hear of it, I promise you. I can't hear of it, indeed, Sir John.

Mrs. Heidel. But you *have* heard of it, brother Sterling;

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Sterling; you know you have; and sent Sir John to propose it to me: But if you can give up your daughter, I sha'n't forsake my niece, I assure you. Ah! if my poor dear Mr. Heidelberg, and our sweet babes, had been alive, he would not have behaved so.

Sterl. Did I, Sir John? Nay, speak!—Bring me off, or we are ruined. [*apart to Sir John.*

Sir John. Why to be sure, to speak the truth—

Mrs. Heidel. To speak the truth, I'm ashamed of you both. But have a care what you are about, brother! have a care, I say. The counsellors are in the house, I hear; and if every thing is not settled to my liking, I'll have nothing more to say to you, if I live these three hundred years: I'll go over to Holland, and settle with Mr. Vanderfpracken, my poor husband's first-cousin, and my own family shall never be the better for a farden of my money, I promise you. [*Exit.*

Remains Sir John and Sterling.

Sterl. I thought so: I knew she never would agree to it.

Sir John. 'Sdeath, how unfortunate! What can we do, Mr. Sterling?

Sterl. Nothing.

Sir

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Sir John. What, must our agreement break off, the moment it is made then?

Sterl. It can't be helped, Sir John. The family, as I told you before, have great expectations from my sister; and if this matter proceeds, you hear yourself that she threatens to leave us. My brother Heidelberg was a warm man; a very warm man; and died worth a plumb at least; a plumb! ay, I warrant you, he died worth a plumb and a half.

Sir John. Well; but if I——

Sterl. And then, my sister has three or four very good mortgages, a deal of money in the three per cents. and Old South-Sea annuities, besides large concerns in the Dutch and French funds. The greatest part of all this she means to leave to our family.

Sir John. I can only say, Sir——

Sterl. Why, your offer of the difference of thirty thousand, was very fair and handsome, to be sure, Sir John.

Sir John. Nay, but I am even willing to——

Sterl. Ay, but if I was to accept it against her will, I might lose above a hundred thousand; so you see the balance is against you, Sir John.

Sir John. But is there no way, do you think, of prevailing on Mrs. Heidelberg to grant her consent?

Sterl.

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Sterl. I am afraid not. However, when her passion is a little abated—for she's very passionate—you may try what can be done. But you must not use my name any more, Sir John.

Sir John. Suppose I was to prevail on lord Ogleby to apply to her, do you think that would have any influence over her?

Sterl. I think he would be more likely to persuade her to it, than any other person in the family. She has a great respect for lord Ogleby; She loves a lord.

Sir John. I'll apply to him this very day. And, if he should prevail on Mrs. Heidelberg, I may depend on your friendship, Mr. Sterling?

Sterl. Ay, ay, I shall be glad to oblige you, when it is in my power; but as the account stands now, you see it is not upon the figures. And so your servant, Sir John. [Exit.]

Sir John Melvil alone.

What a situation am I in! Breaking off with her whom I was bound by treaty to marry; rejected by the object of my affections; and embroiled with this turbulent woman, who governs the whole family. And yet opposition, instead of smothering, encreases my inclination. I must have her.

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her. I'll apply immediately to lord Ogleby; and if he can but bring over the aunt to our party, her influence will overcome the scruples and delicacy of my dear Fanny, and I shall be the happiest of mankind! [Exit.

A C T IV.

A room.

Enter Sterling, Mrs. Heidelberg, and Miss Sterling.

Sterl. **W**HAT! will you send Fanny to town, sister?

Mrs. Heidel. To-morrow morning. I've given orders about it already.

Sterl. Indeed?

Mrs. Heidel. Positively.

Sterl. But consider, sister, at such a time as this, what an odd appearance it will have.

Mrs. Heidel. Not half so odd as her behaviour, brother. This time was intended for happiness, and I'll keep no incendiaries here to destroy it. I insist on her going off to-morrow morning.

Sterl. I'm afraid this is all your doing, Betsey.

Miss

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Miss Sterl. No, indeed, papa; my aunt knows that it is not. For all Fanny's baseness to me, I am sure I would not do, or say, any thing to hurt her with you or my aunt for the world.

Mrs. Heidel. Hold your tongue, Betsey! I will have my way. When she is packed off, every thing will go on as it should do.—Since they are at their intrigues, I'll let them see that we can act with vigour on our part; and the sending her out of the way shall be the preliminary step to all the rest of my proceedings.

Sterl. Well, but, sister——

Mrs. Heidel. It does not signify talking, brother Sterling; for I'm resolved to be rid of her, and I will. Come along, child! [*to Miss Sterling.*] The post-chay shall be at the door by six o'clock in the morning; and if Miss Fanny does not get into it, why I will; and so there's an end of the matter.

[*Bounces out, with Miss Sterling.*]

Mrs. Heidelberg returns.

Mrs. Heidel. One word more, brother Sterling! I expect that you will take your eldest daughter in your hand, and make a formal complaint to lord Ogleby of Sir John Melvil's behaviour. Do this, brother; shew a proper regard for the honour of

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your

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your fammaly yourself, and I shall throw in my mite to the raising of it. If not—but now you know my mind: So act as you please, and take the consequences. [Exit.

Sterling alone.

The devil's in the women for tyranny: mothers, wives, mistresses, or sisters, they always will govern us. As to my sister Heidelberg, she knows the strength of her purse, and domineers upon the credit of it.—“I will do this”—and “you shall do that”—and “you shall do t'other, or else the fammaly sha'n't have a farden of”—[*mimicking.*—]—So absolute with her money! But, to say the truth, nothing but money *can* make us absolute, and so we must e'en make the best of her.

Scene changes to the garden.

Enter Lord Ogleby and Canton.

L. Ogle. What! mademoiselle Fanny to be sent away! Why? wherefore? what's the meaning of all this?

Cant. Je ne sçais pas. I know noting of it.

L. Ogle. It can't be; it sha'n't be. I protest against the measure. She's a fine girl, and I had much rather that the rest of the family were annihilated

hiliated than that she should leave us. Her vulgar father, that's the very abstract of 'Change-Alley—the aunt, that's always endeavouring to be a fine lady—and the pert sister, for ever shewing that she is one—are horrid company indeed, and without her would be intolerable. Ah, la petite Fanchon! she's the thing. Is n't she, Cant?

Cant. Dere is very good sympatie entre vous and dat young lady, mi lor.

L. Ogle. I'll not be left among these Goths and Vandals, your Sterlings, your Heidelbergs, and Devilbergs: If she goes, I'll positively go too.

Cant. In de same post-chay, mi lor? You have no object to dat, I believe, nor mademoiselle neider too, ha, ha, ha!

L. Ogle. Prithce hold thy foolish tongue, Cant! Does thy Swiss stupidity imagine that I can see and talk with a fine girl without desires? My eyes are involuntarily attracted by beautiful objects; I fly as naturally to a fine girl——

Cant. As de fine girl to you, mi lor. Ha, ha, ha! you alway fly togedre like un pair de pigeons.

L. Ogle. Like un pair de pigeons—[mocks him.]
—Vous etes un sot, Monf. Canton. Thou art always dreaming of my intrigues, and never see'st

me *badiner*, but you suspect mischief, you old fool, you.

Cant. I am fool, I confess, but not always fool in dat, mi lor. He, he, he!

L. Ogle. He, he, he! Thou art incorrigible, but thy absurdities amuse one. Thou art like my rappee here, [*takes out his box.*] a most ridiculous superfluity, but a pinch of thee now and then is a most delicious treat.

Cant. You do me great honour, mi lor.

L. Ogle. 'Tis fact, upon my soul. Thou art properly my cephalick snuff, and art no bad medicine against megrims, vertigoes, and profound thinking. Ha, ha, ha!

Cant. Your flatterie, mi lor, vil make me too prode.

L. Ogle. The girl has some little partiality for me, to be sure: but prithee, *Cant*, is not that Miss Fanny yonder?

Cant. [*looking with a glass.*] En verité, 'tis she, mi lor; 'tis one of de pigeons, de pigeons d'amour.

L. Ogle. Don't be ridiculous, you old monkey.

[*Smiling.*]

Cant. I am monkee, I am ole, but I have eye, I have ear, and a little understand, now and den.

L. Ogle. Taisez vous, bete!

Cant.

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Cant. Elle vous attend, mi lor. She vil make-a love to you.

L. Ogle. Will she? Have at her then! A fine girl can't oblige me more. Egad, I find myself a little *enjoué*! Come along, *Cant*! she is but in the next walk; but there is such a deal of this damned crinkum-crankum, as *Sterling* calls it, that one sees people for half an hour before one can get to them. Allons, *Monf. Canton*, allons donc!

[*Exeunt, singing in French.*]

Another part of the garden.

Lovewell and Fanny.

Love. My dear *Fanny*, I cannot bear your distress! it overcomes all my resolutions, and I am prepared for the discovery.

Fanny. But how can it be effected before my departure?

Love. I'll tell you. *Lord Ogleby* seems to entertain a visible partiality for you; and notwithstanding the peculiarities of his behaviour, I am sure that he is humane at the bottom. He is vain to an excess; but withal extremely good-natured, and would do any thing to recommend himself to a lady. Do you open the whole affair of our marriage

to him immediately. It would come with more irresistible persuasion from you than from myself; and I doubt not but you'll gain his friendship and protection at once. His influence and authority will put an end to Sir John's solicitations, remove your aunt's and sister's unkindness and suspicions, and, I hope, reconcile your father and the whole family to our marriage.

Fanny. Heaven grant it! Where is my lord?

Love. I have heard him and Canton since dinner singing French songs under the great walnut-tree by the parlour door. If you meet with him in the garden, you may disclose the whole immediately.

Fanny. Dreadful as the task is, I'll do it. Any thing is better than this continual anxiety.

Love. By that time the discovery is made, I will appear to second you. Ha! here comes my lord. Now, my dear Fanny, summon up all your spirits, plead our cause powerfully, and be sure of success.

[*Going.*

Fanny. Ah, don't leave me!

Love. Nay, you must let me.

Fanny. Well, since it must be so, I'll obey you, if I have the power. Oh, Lovewell!

Love. Consider, our situation is very critical. To-morrow morning is fix'd for your departure, and

if

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if we lose this opportunity, we may wish in vain for another. He approaches. I must retire. Speak, my dear Fanny, speak, and make us happy! [*Exit.*]

Fanny alone.

Good heaven, what a situation am I in! what shall I do? what shall I say to him? I am all confusion.

Enter lord Ogleby and Canton.

L. Ogle. To see so much beauty so solitary, madam, is a satire upon mankind, and 'tis fortunate that one man has broke in upon your reverie for the credit of our sex. I say *now*, madam, for poor Canton here, from age and infirmities, stands for nothing.

Cant. Noting at all, indeed.

Fanny. Your lordship does me great honour. I had a favour to request, my lord!

L. Ogle. A favour, madam! To be honoured with your commands, is an inexpressible favour done to me, madam.

Fanny. If your lordship could indulge me with the honour of a moment's—What is the matter with me? [*aside.*]

L. Ogle. The girl's confused—he! here's something in the wind, faith—I'll have a tete-a-tete with her. Allez vous en! [*to Canton.*]

R 4

Cant.

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Cant. I go. Ah, pauvre mademoiselle ! mi lor, have *pitié* upon the poor *pigeone* !

L. Ogle. I'll knock you down, *Cant*, if you're impertinent. [*smiling.*]

Cant. Den I mus away—[*shuffles along.*] You are mozh please, for all dat. [*aside, and exit.*]

Fanny. I shall sink with apprehension. [*aside.*]

L. Ogle. What a sweet girl ! She's a civiliz'd being, and atones for the barbarism of the rest of the family.

Fanny. My lord ! I—— [*she curtsys, and blushes.*]

L. Ogle. [*addressing her.*] I look upon it, madam, to be one of the luckiest circumstances of my life, that I have this moment the honour of receiving your commands, and the satisfaction of confirming with my tongue, what my eyes perhaps have but too weakly expressed—that I am, literally—the humblest of your servants.

Fanny. I think myself greatly honoured by your lordship's partiality to me; but it distresses me, that I am obliged in my present situation to apply to it for protection.

L. Ogle. I am happy in your distress, madam, because it gives me an opportunity to shew my zeal. Beauty to me is a religion, in which I was born and bred a bigot, and would die a martyr.—I'm in tolerable spirits, faith !

[*aside.*]

Fanny.

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Fanny. There is not perhaps at this moment a more distressed creature than myself. Affection, duty, hope, despair, and a thousand different sentiments, are struggling in my bosom; and even the presence of your lordship, to whom I have flown for protection, adds to my perplexity.

L. Ogle. Does it, madam? Venus forbid!—My old fault; the devil's in me, I think, for perplexing young women. [*aside, and smiling.*] Take courage, madam! dear Miss Fanny, explain. You have a powerful advocate in my breast, I assure you—my heart, madam. I am attached to you by all the laws of sympathy, and delicacy. By my honour, I am.

Fanny. Then I will venture to unburthen my mind. Sir John Melvil, my lord, by the most misplaced, and mistimed declaration of affection for me, has made me the unhappiest of women.

L. Ogle. How, madam! has Sir John made his addresses to you?

Fanny. He has, my lord, in the strongest terms. But I hope it is needless to say, that my duty to my family, love to my sister, and regard to the whole family, as well as the great respect I entertain for your lordship, [*castfying*] made me shudder at his addresses.

L. Ogle.

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L. Ogle. Charming girl! Proceed, my dear Miss Fanny, proceed!

Fanny. In a moment—give me leave, my lord! But if what I have to disclose should be received with anger or displeasure——

L. Ogle. Impossible, by all the tender powers! Speak, I beseech you, or I shall divine the cause before you utter it.

Fanny. Then, my lord, Sir John's addresses are not only shocking to me in themselves, but are more particularly disagreeable to me at this time
—as—as— *[hesitating.]*

L. Ogle. As what, madam?

Fanny. As—pardon my confusion—I am entirely devoted to another.

L. Ogle. If this is not plain, the devil's in it. *[aside.]*—But tell me, my dear Miss Fanny—for I must know—tell me the how, the when, and the where—tell me—

Enter Canton hastily.

Cant. Mi lor, mi lor, mi lor!

L. Ogle. Damn your Swiss impertinence! how durst you interrupt me in the most critical melting moment, that ever love and beauty honoured me with?

Cant.

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Cant. I demande pardonne, mi lor! Sir John Melvil, mi lor, sent me to beg you do him de honour to speak a litt to your lorthip.

L. Ogle. I'm not at leisure—I'm busy—Get away, you stupid old dog, you Swift rascal, or I'll—

Cant. Fort bien, mi lor. [*Cant. goes out on tiptoe.*]

L. Ogle. By the laws of gallantry, madam, this interruption should be death; but as no punishment ought to disturb the triumph of the softer passions, the criminal is pardoned and dismissed. Let us return, madam, to the highest luxury of exalted minds—a declaration of love from the lips of beauty!

Fanny. The entrance of a third person has a little relieved me, but I cannot go through with it—and yet I must open my heart by a discovery, or it will break with its burthen.

L. Ogle. What passion in her eyes! I am alarmed to agitation. [*aside.*] I presume, madam, (and as you have flattered me, by making me a party concerned, I hope you'll excuse the presumption) that——

Fanny. Do you excuse my making you a party concerned, my lord! and let me interest your heart in my behalf, as my future happiness or misery in a great measure depend——

L. Ogle.

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L. Ogle. Upon me, madam?

Fanny. Upon you, my lord. [*sighs.*]

L. Ogle. There's no standing this: I have caught the infection—her tenderness dissolves me. [*sighs.*]

Fanny. And should you too severely judge of a rash action, which passion prompted, and modesty has long concealed——

L. Ogle. [*taking her hand.*] Thou amiable creature, command my heart, for it is vanquished! Speak but thy virtuous wishes, and enjoy them!

Fanny. I cannot, my lord—indeed, I cannot—Mr. Lovewell must tell you my distresses—and when you know them—pity and protect me!

[*Exit in tears.*]

Lord Ogleby alone.

How the devil could I bring her to this? It is too much—too much—I can't bear it—I must give way to this amiable weakness—[*wipes his eyes.*] My heart overflows with sympathy, and I feel every tenderness I have inspired—[*stifles the tear.*] How blind have I been to the desolation I have made! How could I possibly imagine, that a little partial attention and tender civilities to this young creature should have gathered to this burst of passion! Can I be a man, and withstand it? No—

I'll

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I'll sacrifice the whole sex to her.—But here comes the father, quite *apropos*. I'll open the matter immediately, settle the business with him, and take the sweet girl down to Ogleby-house to-morrow morning. But, what the devil! Miss Sterling too! What mischief's in the wind now?

Enter Sterling and Miss Sterling.

Sterl. My lord, your servant! I am attending my daughter here, upon rather a disagreeable affair. Speak to his lordship, Betsey!

L. Ogle. Your eyes, Miss Sterling—for I always read the eyes of a young lady—betray some little emotion. What are your commands, madam?

Miss Sterl. I have but too much cause for my emotion, my lord!

L. Ogle. I cannot commend my kinsman's behaviour, madam; he has behaved like a false knight, I must confess. I have heard of his apostacy: Miss Fanny has informed me of it.

Miss Sterl. Miss Fanny's baseness has been the cause of Sir John's inconstancy.

L. Ogle. Nay, now, my dear Miss Sterling, your passion transports you too far. Sir John may have entertained a passion for Miss Fanny; but, believe me, my dear Miss Sterling, believe me, Miss Fanny has no passion for Sir John. She has a passion, indeed;

indeed; a most tender passion! She has opened her whole soul to me, and I know where her affections are placed. *[conceitedly.]*

Miss Sterl. Not upon Mr. Lovewell, my lord; for I have great reason to think that her seeming attachment to him, is, by his consent, made use of as a blind to cover her designs upon Sir John.

L. Ogle. Lovewell! No, poor lad! she does not think of him. *[smiling.]*

Miss Sterl. Have a care, my lord, that both the families are not made the dupes of Sir John's artifice, and my sister's dissimulation! You don't know her—indeed, my lord, you don't know her—a base, insinuating, perfidious—It is too much! She has been beforehand with me, I perceive. Such unnatural behaviour to me! But, since I see I can have no redress, I am resolved, that, some way or other, I will have revenge. *[Exit.]*

Remain lord Ogleby and Sterling.

Sterl. This is foolish work, my lord!

L. Ogle. I have too much sensibility to bear the tears of beauty.

Sterl. It is touching indeed, my lord; and very moving for a father.

L. Ogle. To be sure, Sir! you must be distress'd beyond measure! Wherefore, to divert your too-exquisite

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exquisite feeling, suppose we change the subject, and proceed to business.

Sterl. With all my heart, my lord!

L. Ogle. You see, Mr. Sterling, we can make no union in our families, by the propos'd marriage.

Sterl. And very sorry I am to see it, my lord.

L. Ogle. Have you set your heart upon being allied to our house, Mr. Sterling?

Sterl. 'Tis my only wish, at present, my *am-
nium*, as I may call it.

L. Ogle. Your wishes shall be fulfill'd.

Sterl. Shall they, my lord? But how—how?

L. Ogle. I'll marry in your family.

Sterl. What! my sister Heidelberg?

L. Ogle. You throw me into a cold sweat, Mr. Sterling. No, not your sister; but your daughter.

Sterl. My daughter!

L. Ogle. Fanny. Now the murder's out!

Sterl. What, *you*, my lord!

L. Ogle. Yes—I, I, Mr. Sterling!

Sterl. No, no, my lord—that's too much.

[Smiling.]

L. Ogle. Too much? I do not comprehend you.

Sterl. What, *you*, my lord, marry my Fanny?—
Bless me, what will the folks say?

L. Ogle. Why, what will they say?

Sterl.

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Sterl. That, you're a bold man, my lord—that's all.

L. Ogle. Mr. Sterling, this may be city wit, for aught I know—Do you court my alliance?

Sterl. To be sure, my lord.

L. Ogle. Then I'll explain. My nephew won't marry your eldest daughter—nor I neither—Your youngest daughter won't marry him—I will marry your youngest daughter.

Sterl. What! with a youngest daughter's fortune, my lord?

L. Ogle. With any fortune, or no fortune at all, Sir. Love is the idol of my heart, and the dæmon Interest sinks before him. So, Sir, as I said before, I will marry your youngest daughter; your youngest daughter will marry me——

Sterl. Who told you so, my lord?

L. Ogle. Her own sweet self, Sir.

Sterl. Indeed?

L. Ogle. Yes, Sir; our affection is mutual; your advantage double and treble—your daughter will be a countess directly—I shall be the happiest of beings—and you'll be father to an earl instead of a baronet.

Sterl. But what will my sister say? and my daughter?

L. Ogle.

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L. Ogle. I'll manage that matter. Nay, if they won't consent, I'll run away with your daughter, in spite of you.

Sterl. Well said, my lord! your spirit's good! I wish you had my constitution! but, if you'll venture, I have no objection, if my sister has none.

L. Ogle. I'll answer for your sister, Sir. Apropos! the lawyers are in the house: I'll have articles drawn, and the whole affair concluded to-morrow morning.

Sterl. Very well: And I'll dispatch Lovewell to London immediately for some fresh papers I shall want; and I shall leave you to manage matters with my sister. You must excuse me, my lord, but I can't help laughing at the match! He, he, he! What will the folks say? *[Exit.*

L. Ogle. What a fellow am I going to make a father of? He has no more feeling than the post in his warehouse. But Fanny's virtues tune me to rapture again, and I won't think of the rest of the family.

Enter Lovewell hastily.

Love. I beg your lordship's pardon! my lord! are you alone, my lord?

L. Ogle. No, my lord, I am not alone! I am in company, the best company!

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Love. My lord !

L. Ogle. I never was in such exquisite enchanting company since my heart first conceived, or my senses tasted pleasure.

Love. Where are they, my lord ? [*Looking about.*

L. Ogle. In my mind, Sir.

Love. What company have you there, my lord ?

[*Smiling.*

L. Ogle. My own ideas, Sir, which so croud upon my imagination, and kindle it to such a delirium of extasy, that wit, wine, musick, poetry, all combined, and each perfection, are but mere mortal shadows of my felicity.

Love. I see that your lordship is happy, and I rejoice at it.

L. Ogle. You *shall* rejoice at it, Sir ; my felicity shall not selfishly be confined, but shall spread its influence to the whole circle of my friends. I need not say, Lovewell, that you shall have your share of it.

Love. Shall I, my lord ?—then I understand you—you have heard—Miss Fanny has informed you——

L. Ogle. She has—I have heard, and she shall be happy—'tis determin'd.

Love. Then I have reached the summit of my wishes—And will your lordship pardon the folly ?

L. Ogle.

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L. Ogle. O yes, poor creature, how could she help it?—'twas unavoidable—fate and necessity.

Love. It was indeed, my lord! Your kindness distracts me!

L. Ogle. And so it did the poor girl, faith.

Love. She trembled to disclose the secret, and declare her affections?

L. Ogle. The world, I believe, will not think her affections ill placed.

Love. [*bowing.*] You are too good, my lord! And do you really excuse the rashness of the action?

L. Ogle. From my very soul, Lovewell.

Love. Your generosity overpowers me. [*bowing.*] I was afraid of her meeting with a cold reception.

L. Ogle. More fool you then!

Who pleads her cause with never-failing beauty,
Here finds a full redress. [*Strikes his breast.*
She's a fine girl, Lovewell.

Love. Her beauty, my lord, is her least merit. She has an understanding——

L. Ogle. Her choice convinces me of that.

Love. [*bowing.*] That's your lordship's goodness. Her choice was a disinterested one.

L. Ogle. No—no—not altogether: it began with interest, and ended in passion.

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Love. Indeed, my lord, if you were acquainted with her goodness of heart, and generosity of mind, as well as you are with the inferior beauties of her face and person——

L. Ogle. I am so perfectly convinced of their existence, and so totally of your mind touching every amiable particular of that sweet girl, that were it not for the cold unfeeling impediments of the law, I would marry her to-morrow morning.

Love. My lord!

L. Ogle. I would, by all that's honourable in man, and amiable in woman!

Love. Marry her! Who do you mean, my lord?

L. Ogle. Miss Fanny Sterling, that is—the countess of Ogleby, that shall be.

Love. I am astonished.

L. Ogle. Why, could you expect less from me?

Love. I did not expect this, my lord.

L. Ogle. Trade and accounts have destroyed your feeling.

Love. No, indeed, my lord. [Sighs.]

L. Ogle. The moment that love and pity entered my breast, I was resolved to plunge into matrimony, and shorten the girl's tortures. I never do any thing by halves; do I, Lovewell?

Love.

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Love. No, indeed, my lord! [*Sighs.*] What an accident!

L. Ogle. What's the matter, Lovewell? thou seem'st to have lost thy faculties. Why don't you wish me joy, man?

Love. O, I do, my lord. [*Sighs.*]

L. Ogle. She said, that you would explain what she had not power to utter. But I wanted no interpreter for the language of love.

Love. But has your lordship considered the consequences of your resolution?

L. Ogle. No, Sir; I am above consideration, when my desires are kindled.

Love. But consider the consequences, my lord, to your nephew Sir John.

L. Ogle. Sir John has considered no consequences himself, Mr. Lovewell.

Love. Mr. Sterling, my lord, will certainly refuse his daughter to Sir John.

L. Ogle. Sir John has already refused Mr. Sterling's daughter.

Love. But what will become of Miss Sterling, my lord.

L. Ogle. What's that to you? You may have her, if you will. I depend upon Mr. Sterling's city-philosophy, to be reconciled to lord Ogleby's be-

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ing his son-in-law, instead of Sir John Melvil, baronet. Don't you think that your master may be brought to that, without having recourse to his calculations? Eh, Lovewell?

Love. But, my lord, that is not the question.

L. Ogle. Whatever is the question, I'll tell you my answer. I am in love with a fine girl, whom I resolve to marry.

Enter Sir John Melvil.

What news with you, Sir John? You look all hurry and impatience, like a messenger after a battle!

Sir John. After a battle, indeed, my lord. I have this day had a severe engagement, and, wanting your lordship as an auxiliary, I have at last mustered up resolution to declare, what my duty to you and to myself have demanded from me some time.

L. Ogle. To the business then, and be as concise as possible; for I am upon the wing. Eh, Lovewell?

[He smiles, and Lovewell bows.]

Sir John. I find 'tis in vain, my lord, to struggle against the force of inclination.

L. Ogle. Very true, Nephew; I am your witness, and will second the motion. Sha'n't I, Lovewell?

[He smiles, and Lovewell bows.]

Sir

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Sir John. Your lordship's generosity encourages me to tell you, that I cannot marry Miss Sterling.

L. Ogle. I am not at all surpris'd at it; she's a bitter potion, that's the truth of it; but as you were to swallow it, and not I, it was your business, and not mine. Any thing more?

Sir John. But this, my lord; that I may be permitted to make my addresses to the other sister.

L. Ogle. O, yes, by all means. Have you any hopes there, nephew? Do you think he'll succeed, Lovewell?

[Smiles, and winks at Lovewell.]

Love. I think not, my lord. [Gravely.]

L. Ogle. I think so too; but let the fool try.

Sir John. Will your lordship favour me with your good offices to remove the chief obstacle to the match, the repugnance of Mrs. Heidelberg?

L. Ogle. Mrs. Heidelberg! Had not you better begin with the young lady first? It will save you a great deal of trouble; won't it, Lovewell? [Smiles.] But, do what you please; it will be the same thing to me, won't it, Lovewell? [conceitedly.] Why don't you laugh at him?

Love. I do, my lord. [Forces a smile.]

Sir John. And your lordship will endeavour to prevail on Mrs. Heidelberg to consent to my marriage with Miss Fanny?

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L. Ogle. I'll speak to Mrs. Heidelberg, about the adorable Fanny, as soon as possible.

Sir John. Your generosity transports me.

L. Ogle. Poor fellow, what a dupe! he little thinks who's in possession of the town. [*Aside.*

Sir John. And your lordship is not offended at this seeming inconstancy?

L. Ogle. Not in the least. Miss Fanny's charms will even excuse infidelity! I look upon women as the *fera natura*—lawful game—and every man who is qualified, has a natural right to pursue them; Lovewell as well as you, and I as well as either of you. Every man shall do his best, without offence to any. What say you, kinsmen?

Sir John. You have made me happy, my lord.

Love. And me, I assure you, my lord.

L. Ogle. And I am superlatively so. *Allons donc!* to horse and away, boys! You to your affairs, and I to mine! *Suivons l'amour!* [*Sings.*

[*Exeunt severally.*

A C T

A C T V.

Fanny's apartment.

Enter Lovewell and Fanny, followed by Betty.

Fanny. **W**HY did you come so soon, Mr. Lovewell? the family is not yet in bed; and Betty certainly heard somebody listening near the chamber door.

Betty. My mistress is right, Sir! evil spirits are abroad; and I am sure you are both too good, not to expect mischief from them.

Love. But who can be so curious, or so wicked?

Betty. I think we have wickedness and curiosity enough in this family, Sir, to expect the worst.

Fanny. I do expect the worst. Prithee, Betty, return to the outward door, and listen if you hear any body in the gallery; and let us know directly.

Betty. I warrant you, madam. The Lord bless you both! [Exit.

Fanny. What did my father want with you this evening?

Love.

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Love. He gave me the key of his closet, with orders to bring from London some papers relating to lord Ogleby.

Fanny. And why did not you obey him?

Love. Because I am certain that his lordship has open'd his heart to him about you, and those papers are wanted merely on that account. But as we shall discover all to-morrow, there will be no occasion for them, and it would be idle in me to go.

Fanny. Hark ! hark ! Bless me, how I tremble ! I feel the terrors of guilt. Indeed, Mr. Lovewell, this is too much for me.

Love. And for me too, my sweet Fanny. Your apprehensions make a coward of me. But what can alarm you ? Your aunt and sister are in their chambers, and you have nothing to fear from the rest of the family.

Fanny. I fear every body, and every thing, and every moment ! My mind is in continual agitation and dread ! Indeed, Mr. Lovewell, this situation may have very unhappy consequences. [*Weeps.*]

Love. But it sha'n't. I would rather tell our story this moment to all the house, and run the risque of maintaining you by the hardest labour, than suffer you to remain in this dangerous perplexity.

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perplexity. What ! shall I sacrifice all my best hopes and affections, in your dear health and safety, for the mean, and in such a case, the meanest consideration—of our fortune ! Were we to be abandoned by all our relations, we have that in our hearts and minds, will weigh against the most affluent circumstances. I should not have propos'd the secrecy of our marriage, but for your sake ; and with hopes that the most generous sacrifice you have made to love and me, might be less injurious to you, by waiting a lucky moment of reconciliation.

Fanny. Hush ! hush ! for heav'n's sake, my dear Lovewell, don't be so warm ! Your generosity gets the better of your prudence ; you will be heard, and we shall be discovered. I am satisfied ; indeed I am ! Excuse this weakness, this delicacy—this what you will—My mind's at peace—indeed, it is—think no more of it, if you love me !

Love. That one word has charmed me, as it always does, to the most implicit obedience ; it would be the worst of ingratitude in me to distress you a moment.

[*Kisses her.*]

Re-enter Betty.

Betty. [*in a low voice.*] I'm sorry to disturb you.

Fanny. Ha ! what's the matter ?

Love. Have you heard any body ?

Betty.

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Betty. Yes, yes, I have, and they have heard you too, or I am mistaken—if they had *seen* you too, we should have been in a fine quandary.

Fanny. Prithee, don't prate now, Betty!

Love. What did you hear?

Betty. I was preparing myself, as usual, to take me a little nap——

Love. A nap!

Betty. Yes, Sir, a nap; for I watch much better so than wide awake; and when I had wrap'd this handkerchief round my head, for fear of the ear-ach from the key-hole, I thought I heard a kind of a sort of a buzzing, which I first took for a gnat, and shook my head two or three times, and went so with my hand——

Fanny. Well, well—and so——

Betty. And so, madam, when I heard Mr. Love-well a little loud, I heard the buzzing louder too; and pulling off my handkerchief softly, I could hear this sort of noise——

[*Makes an indistinct noise like speaking.*]

Fanny. Well, and what did they say?

Betty. Oh! I could not understand a word of what was said.

Love. The outward door is lock'd?

Betty. Yes; and I bolted it too, for fear of the worst,

Fanny.

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Fanny. Why did you? they must have heard you, if they were near.

Betty. And I did it on purpose, madam, and cough'd a little too, that they might not hear Mr. Lovewell's voice. When I was silent, they were silent, and so I came to tell you.

Fanny. What shall we do?

Love. Fear nothing; we know the worst; it will only bring on our catastrophe a little too soon. But Betty might fancy this noise: she's in the conspiracy, and can make a man of a mouse at any time.

Betty. I can distinguish a man from a mouse, as well as my betters! I'm sorry you think so ill of me, Sir.

Fanny. He compliments you; don't be a fool! Now you have set her tongue a-running, she'll mutter for an hour. [*to Lovewell.*] I'll go and hearken myself. [*Exit.*]

Betty. I'll turn my back upon no girl, for sincerity and service. [*Half aside, and muttering.*]

Love. Thou art the first in the world for both; and I will reward you soon, Betty, for one and the other.

Betty. I'm not mercenary neither—I can live on a little, with a good carter.

Re-enter

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Re-enter Fanny.

Fanny. All seems quiet. Suppose, my dear, you go to your own room—I shall be much easier then—and to-morrow we will be prepared for the discovery.

Betty. You may discover, if you please; but for my part, I shall still be secret.

[Half aside, and muttering.]

Love. Should I leave you now, if they still are upon the watch, we shall lose the advantage of our delay. Besides, we should consult upon to-morrow's business. Let Betty go to her own room, and lock the outward door after her; we can fasten this; and when she thinks all safe, she may return and let me out as usual.

Betty. Shall I, madam?

Fanny. Do let me have my way to-night, and you shall command me ever after. I would not have you surprized here for the world! Pray leave me! I shall be quite myself again, if you will oblige me.

Love. I live only to oblige you, my sweet Fanny! I'll be gone this moment. *[Going.]*

Fanny. Let us listen first at the door, that you may not be intercepted. Betty shall go first, and if they lay hold of her——

Betty.

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Betty. They'll have the wrong fow by the ear, I can tell them that. [*Going hastily.*]

Fanny. Softly, softly, Betty! Don't venture out, if you hear a noise. Softly, I beg of you! See, Mr. Lovewell, the effects of indiscretion!

Love. But love! love, Fanny, makes amends for all! [*Exeunt all, softly.*]

Scene changes to a gallery, which leads to several bed-chambers.

Enter Miss Sterling, leading Mrs. Heidelberg in a night-cap.

Miss Sterl. This way, dear madam, and then I'll tell you all.

Mrs. Heidel. Nay, but niece—consider a little—don't drag me out in this figur—let me put on my fly-cap! If any of my lord's family, or the counsellors at law, should be stirring, I should be perdigus disconcerted.

Miss Sterl. But, my dear madam, a moment is an age, in my situation. I am sure my sister has been plotting my disgrace and ruin in that chamber. Oh, she's all craft and wickedness.

Mrs. Heidel. Weil, but softly, Betsey!—you are all in emotion—your mind is too much flustrated—

you

you can neither eat nor drink, nor take your natural rest—compose yourself, child; for if we are not as warysome as they are wicked, we shall disgrace ourselves and the whole fammaly.

Miss Sterl. We are disgraced already, madam. Sir John Melvil has forsaken me; my lord cares for nobody but himself; or if for any body, it is my sister; my father, for the sake of a better bargain, would marry me to a 'Change-broker; so that if you, madam, don't continue my friend—if you forsake me—if I am to lose my best hopes and consolation—in your tenderness—and affections—I had better—at once—give up the matter—and let my sister enjoy—the fruits of her treachery—trample with scorn upon the rights of her elder sister; the will of the best of aunts, and the weakness of a too-interested father.

[She pretends to be bursting into tears all this speech.]

Mrs. Heidel. Don't, Betsey—keep up your spirit—I hate whimpering—I am your friend—depend upon me in every partickler—but be composed, and tell me what new mischief you have discover'd.

Miss Sterl. I had no desire to sleep, and would not undress myself, knowing that my Machiavel sister would not rest till she had broke my heart: I

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was so uneasy that I could not stay in my room ; but when I thought all the house was quiet, I sent my maid to discover what was going forward ; she immediately came back and told me, that they were in high consultation ; that she had heard only, for it was in the dark, my sister's maid conduct Sir John Melvil to her mistress, and then lock the door.

Mrs. Heidel. And how did you conduct yourself in this dilemma ?

Miss Sterl. I return'd with her, and could hear a man's voice, though nothing that they said distinctly ; and you may depend upon it, that Sir John is now in that room, that they have settled the matter, and will run away together before morning, if we don't prevent them.

Mrs. Heidel. Why, the brazen slut ! has she got her sister's husband (that is to be) lock'd up in her chamber ! at night too !—I tremble at the thoughts !

Miss Sterl. Hush, madam ! I hear something.

Mrs. Heidel. You frighten me—let me put on my fly-cap—I would not be seen in this figure for the world !

Miss Sterl. 'Tis dark, madam ; you can't be seen.

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Mrs. Heidel. I perceive there's a candle coming, and a man too !

Miss Sterl. Nothing but servants. Let us retire a moment ! *[They retire.]*

Enter Brush, half-drunk, laying hold of the Chambermaid, who has a candle in her hand.

Chamb. Be quiet, Mr. Brush ! I shall drop down with terror !

Brush. But, my sweet, and most amiable Chambermaid, if you have no love, you may hearken to a little reason ; that cannot possibly do your virtue any harm.

Chamb. But you will do me harm, Mr. Brush, and a great deal of harm too—pray, let me go—I am ruin'd if they hear you—I tremble like an asp.

Brush. But they sha'n't hear us—and if you have a mind to be ruined, it shall be the making of your fortune, you little slut, you !—therefore, I say it again, if you have no love, hear a little reason !

Chamb. I wonder at your impudence, Mr. Brush, to use me in this manner ; this is not the way to keep me company, I assure you. You are a town rake, I see ; and now you are a little in liquor, you fear nothing.

Brush.

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Brush. Nothing, by heav'n's, but your frowns, most amiable Chambermaid. I am a little electrified, that's the truth on't; I am not used to drink port, and your master's is so heady, that a pint of it oversets a claret-drinker.

Chamb. Don't be rude! Bless me, I shall be ruin'd! what will become of me?

Brush. I'll take care of you, by all that's honourable.

Chamb. You are a base man, to use me so! I'll cry out, if you don't let me go. That is Miss Sterling's chamber, that Miss Fanny's, and that Madam Heidelberg's. *[Pointing.*

Brush. And that my lord Ogleby's, and that my lady What-d'ye-call-em's. I don't mind such folks when I'm sober, much less when I am whimsical—rather above that too.

Chamb. More shame for you, Mr. Brush! You terrify me! you have no modesty.

Brush. O, but I have, my sweet spider-bruisher! For instance, I reverence Miss Fanny; she's a most delicious morsel, and fit for a prince: with all my horrors of matrimony, I could marry her myself. But, for her sister—

Miss Sterl. There, there, madam; all in a story!

Chamb. Bless me, Mr. Brush! I heard something!

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Brush. Rats! Rats, I suppose, that are gnawing the old timbers of this execrable old dungeon. If it was mine, I would pull it down, and fill your fine canal up with the rubbish; and then I should get rid of two damn'd things at once.

Chamb. Law! law! how you blaspheme! We shall have the house upon our head for it.

Brush. No, no, it will last our time. But, as I was saying, the elder sister—Miss Jezabel——

Chamb. Is a fine young lady, for all your evil tongue.

Brush. No; we have smoak'd her already; and unless she marries our old Swiss, she can have none of us—no, no, she won't do—we are a little too nice.

Chamb. You're a monstrous rake, Mr. Brush, and don't care what you say.

Brush. Why, for that matter, my dear, I am a little inclined to mischief; and if you won't have pity upon me, I will break open that door and ravish Mrs. Heidelberg.

Mrs. Heidel. There's no bearing this—You profligate monster! [coming forward.

Chamb. Ha! I am undone!

Brush. Zounds! here she is, by all that's monstrous.

[Runs off.
Miss

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Miss Sterl. A fine discourse you have had with that fellow !

Mrs. Heidel. And a fine time of night it is to be here with that drunken monster !

Miss Sterl. What have you to say for yourself ?

Chamb. I can say nothing—I am so frighten'd, and so asham'd—but indeed I am virtuous—I am virtuous indeed.

Mrs. Heidel. Well, well—don't tremble so ; but tell us what you know of this horrible plot here.

Miss Sterl. We'll forgive you, if you'll discover all.

Chamb. Why, madam—don't let me betray my fellow-servants ! I sha'n't sleep in my bed, if I do.

Mrs. Heidel. Then you shall sleep somewhere else to-morrow night.

Chamb. O dear ! what shall I do ?

Mrs. Heidel. Tell us this moment, or I'll turn you out of doors directly.

Chamb. Why, our butler has been treating us below in his pantry. Mr. Brush forc'd us to make a kind of holiday night of it.

Miss Sterl. Holiday ! for what ?

Chamb. Nay, I only made one.

Miss Sterl. Well, well ; but upon what account ?

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Chamb. Because, as how, madam, there was a change in the family, they said; that his honour, Sir John, was to marry Miss Fanny instead of your ladyship.

Miss Sterl. And so you made a holiday for that—very fine!

Chamb. I did not make it, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. But do you know nothing of Sir John's being to run away with Miss Fanny to-night?

Chamb. No, indeed, ma'am!

Miss Sterl. Nor of his being now locked up in my sister's chamber?

Chamb. No, as I hope for mercy, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. Well, I'll put an end to all this directly. Do you run to my brother Sterling—

Chamb. Now, ma'am! 'Tis so very late, ma'am—

Mrs. Heidel. I don't care how late it is. Tell him there are thieves in the house—that the house is o'fire—tell him to come here immediately—go, I say!

Chamb. I will, I will; though I'm frighten'd out of my wits. [Exit.

Mrs. Heidel. Do you watch here, my dear; and I'll put myself in order to face them. We'll plot 'em, and counter-plot 'em too. [Exit into her chamber.

Miss

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Miss Sterl. I have as much pleasure in this revenge, as in being made a countess ! Ha ! they are unlocking the door. Now for it ! *[Retires.]*

Fanny's door is unlock'd, and Betty comes out with a candle. Miss Sterling approaches her.

Betty. *[calling within.]* Sir, Sir !—now's your time—all's clear. *[Seeing Miss Sterl.]* Stay, stay ! not yet ! we are watch'd.

Miss Sterl. And so you are, madam Betty.

[Miss Sterling lays hold of her, while Betty locks the door, and puts the key into her pocket.]

Betty. *[turning round.]* What's the matter, madam ?

Miss Sterl. Nay, that you shall tell my father and aunt, madam.

Betty. I am no tell-tale, madam, and no thief ; they'll get nothing from me.

Miss Sterl. You have a great deal of courage, Betty ; and, considering the secrets you have to keep, you have occasion for it.

Betty. My mistress shall never repent her good opinion of me, ma'am.

Enter Sterling.

Sterl. What is all this ? what's the matter ? why am I disturbed in this manner ?

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Miss Sterl. This creature, and my distresses, Sir, will explain the matter.

Re-enter Mrs. Heidelberg, with another head-dress.

Mrs. Heidel. Now I'm prepar'd for the rancounter ! Well, brother, have you heard of this scene of wickedness ?

Sterl. Not I—but what is it ? speak !—I was got into my little closet—all the lawyers were in bed, and I had almost lost my senses in the confusion of lord Ogleby's mortgages, when I was alarmed with a foolish girl, who could hardly speak ; and whether it's fire or thieves, or murder, or a rape, I am quite in the dark.

Mrs. Heidel. No, no, there's no rape, brother ! all parties are willing, I believe.

Miss Sterl. Who's in that chamber ?

[Detaining Betty, who seemed to be stealing away.

Betty. My mistress.

Miss Sterl. And who is with your mistress ?

Betty. Why, who should there be ?

Miss Sterl. Open the door then, and let us see !

Betty. The door is open, madam. *[Miss Sterling goes to the door.]* I'll sooner die than peach !

[Exit hastily.

Miss Sterl. The door's lock'd ; and she has got the key in her pocket.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Heidel. There's impudence, brother ! piping hot from your daughter Fanny's school !

Sterl. But, zounds ! what is all this about ? You tell me of a sum-total, and you don't produce the particulars.

Mrs. Heidel. Sir John Melvil is lock'd up in your daughter's bed-chamber. There is the particular !

Sterl. The devil he is ! that's bad !

Miss Sterl. And he has been there some time too.

Sterl. Ditto.

Mrs. Heidel. Ditto ! worse and worse, I say. I'll raise the house, and expose him to my lord and the whole fammaly !

Sterl. By no means ! we shall expose ourselves, sister ! The best way is to insure privately. Let me alone ! I'll make him marry her to-morrow-morning.

Miss Sterl. Make him marry her ! this is beyond all patience ! You have thrown away all your affection, and I shall do as much by my obedience : Unnatural fathers make unnatural children. My revenge is in my own power, and I'll indulge it. Had they made their escape, I should have been exposed to the derision of the world : but the deriders shall be derided ; and so—help, help, there ! thieves ! thieves !

Mrs.

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Mrs. Heidel. 'Tit-for-tat, Betsey ! you are right, my girl.

Sterl. Zounds ! you'll spoil all—you'll raise the whole family—the devil's in the girl !

Mrs. Heidel. No, no ; the devil's in *you*, brother. I am agham'd of your principles. What ! would you connive at your daughter's being lock'd up with her sister's husband ? Help ! thieves ! thieves ! I say. [*Cries out.*

Sterl. Sister, I beg you !—daughter, I command you !—If you have no regard for me, consider yourselves !—We shall lose this opportunity of ennobling our blood, and getting above twenty *per cent.* for our money.

Miss Sterl. What, by my disgrace and my sister's triumph ! I have a spirit above such mean considerations ; and, to shew you that it is not a low-bred, vulgar, 'Change-alley spirit—help ! help ! thieves ! thieves ! thieves ! I say.

Sterl. Ay, ay, you may save your lungs—the house is in an uproar !—Women at best have no discretion : but, in a passion, they'll fire a house, or burn themselves in it, rather than not be revenged.

Enter Canton, in a night-gown and slippers.

Cant. Eh, diable ! vat is de raison of dis great noise, dis tintamarre ?

Sterl.

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Sterl. Ask those ladies, Sir; 'tis of their making.

Lord Ogleby [calls within.]

Brush! Brush! Canton! where are you? What's the matter? [rings a bell.] Where are you?

Sterl. 'Tis my lord calls, Mr. Canton.

Cant. I come, mi lor! [Exit.

[*Lord Ogleby* still rings.]

Serjeant Flower [calls within.]

A light! a light here!—where are the servants? Bring a light for me and my brothers.

Sterl. Lights here! lights for the gentlemen!

[Exit.

Mrs. Heidel. My brother feels, I see—your sister's turn will come next.

Miss Sterl. Ay, ay, let it go round, madam; it is the only comfort I have left.

Re-enter Sterling, with lights, before Serjeant Flower (with one boot and a slipper) and Traverses.

Sterl. This way, Sir! this way, gentlemen!

Flower. Well, but, Mr. Sterling, no danger, I hope. Have they made a burglarious entry? Are you prepared to repulse them? I am very much alarm'd about thieves at circuit-time.—They would
be

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be particularly severe with us gentlemen of the bar.

Traverse. No danger, Mr. Sterling; no trespass, I hope?

Sterl. None, gentlemen, but of those ladies' makings.

Mrs. Heidel. You'll be ashamed to know, gentlemen, that all your labours and studies about this young lady are thrown away. Sir John Melvil is at this moment lock'd up with this lady's younger sister.

Flower. The thing is a little extraordinary, to be sure: but, why were we to be frighten'd out of our beds for this? Could not we have try'd this cause to-morrow morning?

Miss Sterl. But, Sir, by to-morrow morning, perhaps, even your assistance would not have been of any service—the birds, now in that cage, would have flown away.

Enter lord Ogleby (in his robe-de-chambre, night-cap, &c. leaning on Canton.)

L. Ogle. I had rather lose a limb than my night's rest! What's the matter with you all?

Sterl. Ay, ay, 'tis all over! Here's my lord too.

L. Ogle. What's all this shrieking and screaming?

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ing? Where's my angelick Fanny? she's safe, I hope!

Mrs. Heidel. Your angelick Fanny, my lord, is lock'd up with your angelick nephew in that chamber.

L. Ogle. My nephew! then will I be excommunicated.

Mrs. Heidel. Your nephew, my lord, has been plotting to run away with the younger sister; and the younger sister has been plotting to run away with your nephew: and if we had not watch'd them and call'd up the fammaly, they had been upon the scamper to Scotland by this time.

L. Ogle. Look'ee, ladies!—I know that Sir John has conceived a violent passion for Miss Fanny; and I know too that Miss Fanny has conceived a violent passion for another person; and I am so well convine'd of the rectitude of her affections, that I will support them with my fortune, my honour, and my life.—Eh, shan't I, Mr. Sterling? [*smiling.*] what say you?

Sterl. [*sulkily*] To be sure, my lord.—These bawling women have been the ruin of every thing.

[*aside.*]

L. Ogle. But come, I'll end this business in a trice. If you, ladies, will compose yourselves, and
Mr.

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Mr. Sterling will insure Miss Fanny from violence, I will engage to draw her from her pillow with a whisper thro' the keyhole.

Mrs. Heidel. The horrid creaturs!—I say, my lord, break the door open.

L. Ogle. Let me beg of your delicacy not to be too precipitate!—Now to our experiment!

[advancing towards the door.]

Miss Sterl. Now what will they do?—My heart will beat through my bosom.

Enter Betty, with the key.

Betty. There's no occasion for breaking open doors, my lord; we have done nothing that we ought to be asham'd of, and my mistress shall face her enemies.

[going to unlock the door.]

Mrs. Heidel. There's impudence!

L. Ogle. The mystery thickens. Lady of the bed-chamber! *[to Betty.]* open the door, and entreat Sir John Melvil (for these ladies will have it that he is there) to appear and answer to high crimes and misdemeanors. Call Sir John Melvil into the court!

Enter Sir John Melvil, on the other side.

Sir John. I am here, my lord.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Heidel. Heyday!

Miss Sterl. Astonishment!

Sir John. What is all this alarm and confusion?
There is nothing but hurry in the house; what is the reason of it?

L. Ogle. Because you have been in that chamber—*have* been! nay, you *are* there at this moment, as these ladies have protested; so don't deny it!

Traverse. This is the clearest *alibi* I ever knew, Mr. Serjeant.

Flower. *Luce clarius.*

L. Ogle. Upon my word, ladies, if you have often these frolicks, it would be really entertaining to pass a whole summer with you. But, come! [*to Betty.*] open the door, and entreat your amiable mistress to come forth, and dispel all our doubts with her smiles.

Betty. [*opening the door.*] Madam, you are wanted in this room. [*partly.*]

Enter Fanny, in great confusion.

Miss Sterl. You see she's ready dressed—and what confusion she's in!

Mrs. Heidel. Ready to pack off, bag and baggage!
Her guilt confounds her!

Flower.

Flower. Silence in the court, ladies !

Fanny. I *am* confounded, indeed, madam !

L. Ogle. Don't droop, my beauteous lily ! but with your own peculiar modesty declare your state of mind. Pour conviction into their ears, and raptures into mine. [*smiling.*

Fanny. I am at this moment the most unhappy—most distress'd—the tumult is too much for my heart—and I want the power to reveal a secret, which to conceal has been the misfortune and misery of my—my— [*faints away.*

L. Ogle. She faints ! help, help ! for the fairest, and best of women !

Betty. [*running to her.*] Oh my dear mistress ! help, help, there !

Sir John. Ha ! let me fly to her assistance.

}

*Speaking
all at
once.*

Lovewell rushes out from the chamber.

Love. My Fanny in danger ! I can contain no longer—Prudence were now a crime ; all other cares were lost in this ! Speak, speak to me, my dearest Fanny ! let me but hear thy voice ! open your eyes, and bless me with the smallest sign of life ! [*during this speech they are all in amazement.*

Miss Sterl. Lovewell !—I am easy.

Mrs.

THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE. 289

Mrs. Heidel. I am thunderstruck !

L. Ogle. I am petrify'd !

Sir John. And I undone !

Fanny [*recovering*]. O Lovewell !—even supported by thee, I dare not look my father nor his lordship in the face.

Sterl. What now ! did not I send you to London, Sir ?

L. Ogle. Eh !—What !—How's this ?—By what right and title have you been half the night in that lady's bed-chamber ?

Lov. By that right which makes me the happiest of men ; and by a title which I would not forego, for any the best of kings could give.

Betty. I could cry my eyes out to hear his magnanimity.

L. Ogle. I am annihilated !

Sterl. I have been choaked with rage and wonder ; but now I can speak. Zounds, what have you to say to me ? Lovewell, you are a villain. You have broke your word with me.

Fanny. Indeed, Sir, he has not. You forbid him to think of me, when it was out of his power to obey you ; we have been married these four months.

Sterl. And he sha'n't stay in my house four hours. What baseness and treachery ! As for you,

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you

you shall repent this step as long as you live, madam.

Fanny. Indeed, Sir, it is impossible to conceive the tortures I have already endured in consequence of my disobedience. My heart has continually upbraided me for it; and though I was too weak to struggle with affection, I feel that I must be miserable for ever without your forgiveness.

Sterl. Lovewell, you shall leave my house directly;—and you shall follow him, madam. [*To Fanny.*

L. Ogle. And if they do, I will receive them into mine. Look ye, Mr. Sterling, there have been some mistakes, which we had all better forget for our own sakes; and the best way to forget is to forgive the cause of them; which I do from my soul.—Poor girl! I swore to support her affection with my life and fortune;—'tis a debt of honour, and must be paid. You swore as much too, Mr. Sterling; but your laws in the city will excuse *you*, I suppose; for you never strike a balance without errors excepted.

Sterl. I am a father, my lord; but for the sake of all other fathers, I think I ought not to forgive her, for fear of encouraging other silly girls like herself to throw themselves away without the consent of their parents.

Love. I hope there will be no danger of that,
Sir.

THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE. 291

Sir. Young ladies with minds, like my Fanny's, would startle at the very shadow of vice ; and when they know to what uneasiness only an indiscretion has exposed her, her example, instead of encouraging, will rather serve to deter them.

Mrs. Heidel. Indiscretion, quotha ! a mighty pretty delicate word to express disobedience !

L. Ogle. For my part, I indulge my own passions too much, to tyrannize over those of other people. Poor souls, I pity them. And you must forgive them too. Come, come, melt a little of your flint, Mr. Sterling !

Sterl. Why, why—as to that, my lord—to be sure he is a relation of yours, my lord—what say you, sister Heidelberg ?

Mrs. Heidel. The girl's ruined, and I forgive her.

Sterl. Well—so do I then—Nay, no thanks !—
[to Lovewell and Fanny, who seem preparing to speak.]
there's an end of the matter.

L. Ogle. But, Lovewell, what makes you dumb all this while ?

Love. Your kindness, my lord—I can scarce believe my own senses—they are all in a tumult of fear, joy, love, expectation, and gratitude ! I ever was, and am now more bound in duty to your lordship. For you, Mr. Sterling, if every moment

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of my life, spent gratefully in your service, will in some measure compensate the want of fortune, you perhaps will not repent your goodness to me. And you, ladies, I flatter myself, will not for the future suspect me of artifice and intrigue—I shall be happy to oblige and serve you.—As for you, Sir John——

Sir John. No apologies to me, Lovewell! I do not deserve any. All I have to offer in excuse for what has happened, is my total ignorance of your situation. Had you dealt a little more openly with me, you would have saved me, and yourself, and that lady, (who I hope will pardon my behaviour) a great deal of uneasiness. Give me leave, however, to assure you, that light and capricious as I may have appeared, now my infatuation is over, I have sensibility enough to be ashamed of the part I have acted, and honour enough to rejoice at your happiness.

Love. And now, my dearest Fanny, though we are seemingly the happiest of beings, yet all our joys will be damp'd, if his lordship's generosity and Mr. Sterling's forgiveness should not be succeeded by the indulgence, approbation, and consent of these, our best benefactors. [To the audience.

EPI.

EPILOGUE.

Written by Mr. GARRICK.

The Musick by Mr. BARTHELEMON.

CHARACTERS of the EPILOGUE.

Lord MINUM,	<i>Mr. Dodd.</i>
Colonel TRILL,	<i>Mr. Vernon.</i>
Sir PATRICK MAHONY,	<i>Mr. Moody.</i>
Miss CROTCHET,	<i>Mrs. Abington.</i>
Mrs. QUAYER,	<i>Mrs. Lee.</i>
First Lady,	<i>Mrs. Bradshaw.</i>
Second Lady,	<i>Miss Pearce.</i>
Third Lady,	<i>Mrs. Dorman.</i>

Scene, an assembly.

Several persons at cards, at different tables; among the rest, Colonel Trill, Lord Minum, Mrs. Quaver, Sir Patrick Mahony.

At the quadrille table.

Colonel Trill.

LADIES, with leave!

Second Lady.

Pafs!

Third Lady.

Pafs!

Mrs. Quaver.

You must do more.

U 3

Colonel

EPILOGUE.

Colonel Trill.

Indeed I can't.

Mrs. Quaver.

I play in hearts.

Colonel Trill.

Encore !

Second Lady.

What luck !

Colonel Trill.

To-night at Drury-lane is play'd
A comedy, and *toute nouvelle*—a spade !
Is not Miss Crotchet at the play ?

Mrs. Quaver.

My niece
Has made a party, Sir, to damn the piece.

At the whist table.

Lord Minum.

I hate a playhouse—Trump !—It makes me sick.

First Lady.

We're two by honours, ma'am.

Lord Minum.

And we th' odd trick.
Pray do you know the author, colonel Trill ?

Colonel Trill.

I know no poets, heav'n be prais'd !—Spadille.

First

EPILOGUE

First Lady.

I'll tell you who, my lord! [*Whispers my lord.*

Lord Minum.

What, he again?

"And dwell such daring souls in little men?"

Be whose it will, they down our throats will cram it!

Colonel Trill.

O, no.—I have a club—the best.—We'll damn it.

Mrs. Quaver.

O bravo, colonel! music is my flame.

Lord Minum.

And mine, by Jupiter!—We've won the game.

Colonel Trill.

What, do you love all musick?

Mrs. Quaver.

No, not Handel's.

And nasty plays——

Lord Minum.

Are fit for Goths and Vandals.

[*Rise from the table and pay.*

From the piquette table.

Sir Patrick.

Well, faith and troth! that Shakespeare was no fool!

Colonel Trill.

I'm glad you like him, Sir!—So ends the pool!

[*Pay and rise from the table.*

EPILOGUE

Song by the Colonel.

I hate all their nonsense,
Their Shakespeares and Jonsons,
Their plays, and their playhouse, and bards :
'Tis finging, not faying ;
A fig for all playing,
But playing, as we do, at cards !

I love to see Jonas,
Am pleas'd too with Comus ;
Each well the spectator rewards.
So clever, so neat in
Their tricks, and their cheating !
Like them we would fain deal our cards.

Sir Patrick.

King Lare is touching !—And how fine to see
Ould Hamlet's ghost !—"To be, or not to be."—
What are your op'ras to Othello's roar ?
Oh, he's an angel of a blackamoor !

Lord Minum.

What, when he choaks his wife ?—

Colonel Trill.

And calls her whore ?

Sir Patrick.

King Richard calls his horse—and then Macbeth,
Whene'er he murders—takes away the breath.

My

EPILOGUE

My blood runs cold at every syllable,
To see the dagger—that's invifible. *[All laugh.*

Sir Patrick.

Laugh if you please, a pretty play—

Lord Minam.

Is pretty.

Sir Patrick.

And when there's wit in't—

Colonel Trill.

To be fure 'tis witty.

Sir Patrick.

I love the playhouse now—fo light and gay,
With all thofe candles, they have ta'en away!

[All laugh.

For all your game, what makes it fo much brighter?

Colonel Trill.

Put out the lights, and then——

Lord Minam.

'Tis fo much lighter.

Sir Patrick.

Pray do you mane, Sirs, more than you exprefs?

Colonel Trill.

Just as it happens——

Lord Minam.

Either more, or lefs.

Mrs. Quaver.

An't you afham'd, Sir?

[To Sir Patrick.

Sir

EPILOGUE.

Sir Patrick.

Me!—I seldom blush :
For little Shakespeare, faith, I'd take a push !

Lord Minum.

News, news! here comes miss Crotchet from the play.

Enter Miss Crotchet.

Mrs. Quaver.

Well, Crotchet, what's the news ?

Miss Crotchet.

We've lost the day.

Colonel Trill.

Tell us, dear Miss, all you have heard and seen.

Miss Crotchet.

I'm tir'd—a chair—here, take my capuchin !

Lord Minum.

And isn't it damn'd, miss ?

Miss Crotchet.

No, my lord, not quite :

But we shall damn it.

Colonel Trill.

When ?

Miss Crotchet.

To-morrow night.

There is a party of us, all of fashion,
Resolv'd to exterminate this vulgar passion :

A playhouse,

EPILOGUE.

A playhouse, what a place !—I must forswear it.
A little mischief only makes one bear it.
Such crowds of city folks !—so rude and pressing !
And their horse-laugh, so hideously distressing !
Whene'er we hiss'd, they frown'd and fell a swearing,
Like their own Guildhall giants—fierce and staring !

Colonel Trill.

What said the folks of fashion ? were they cross ?

Lord Minum.

The rest have no more judgment than my horse.

Miss Crotch.

Lord Grimley swore 'twas execrable stuff.
Says one, why so, my lord ?—my lord took snuff.
In the first act lord George began to doze,
And criticis'd the author—through his nose ;
So loud indeed, that as his lordship snor'd,
The pit turn'd round, and all the brutes encor'd.
Some lords, indeed, approv'd the author's jokes.

Lord Minum.

We have among us, miss, *some* foolish folks.

Miss Crotch.

Says poor lord Simper—well, now to my mind
The piece is good ;—but he's both deaf and blind.

Sir Patrick.

Upon my soul a very pretty story !
And quality appears in all its glory !—

There

EPILOGUE

There was some merit in the piece, no doubt.

Miss Crotchet.

O, to be sure!—if one could find it out.

Colonel Trill.

But tell us, miss, the subject of the play.

Miss Crotchet.

Why, 'twas a marriage—yes, a marriage—stay!

A lord, an aunt, two sisters, and a merchant—

A baronet—ten lawyers—a fat serjeant,

Are all produc'd—to talk with one another;

And about something make a mighty pother;

They all go in, and out; and to, and fro;

And talk, and quarrel—as they come and go—

Then go to bed, and then get up—and then—

Scream, faint, scold, kifs,—and go to bed again.

[All laugh.]

Such is the play—your judgment! never sham it.

Colonel Trill.

Oh, damn it!

Mrs. Quaver.

Damn it!

First Lady.

Damn it!

Miss Crotchet.

Damn it!

Lord Minum.

Damn it!

Sir

EPILOGUE

Sir Patrick.

Well, faith, you speak your minds, and I'll be free;
Good night! this company's too good for me. [*Going.*

Colonel Trill.

Your judgment, dear Sir Patrick, makes us proud.

[*All Laugh.*

Sir Patrick.

Laugh if you please, but pray don't laugh too loud.

[*Exit.*

RECITATIVE.

Colonel Trill.

Now the barbarian's gone, Miss, tune your tongue,
And let us raise our spirits high with song!

RECITATIVE.

Miss Cretchet.

Colonel, *de tout mon cœur*—I've one in *petto*,
Which you shall join, and make it a *duetto*.

RECITATIVE.

Lord Minum.

Bella signora, et amico mio!
I too will join, and then we'll make a *trio*.

Colonel Trill.

Come all, and join the full-mouth'd chorus,
And drive all Tragedy and Comedy before us.

[*All the company rise, and advance to
the front of the stage.*

AIR

E P I L O G U E.

A I R.

Colonel Trill.

Would you ever go to see a Tragedy ?

Miss Crotchbet.

Never, never.

Colonel Trill.

A Comedy ?

Lord Minum.

Never, never,

Live for ever !

Tweddle-dum and tweddle-dee !

Colonel Trill, Lord Minum, and Miss Crotchbet.

Live for ever !

Tweddle-dum and tweddle-dee !

C H O R U S.

Would you ever go to see, &c.



END of the FIRST VOLUME.

